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THE

READING CLUB

AND

HANDY SPEAKER

BEING

SERIOUS, HUMOROUS, PATHETIC, PATRIOTIC,
AND DRAMATIC SELECTIONS IN
PROSE AND POETRY

FOR

READINGS AND RECITATIONS

EDITED BY

GEORGE M. BAKER

No. 20

BOSTON

Walter H. Baker & Co.



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THE READING-CLUB.

THE RIDE OF REUBEN BRIGHT.

A STORY of danger and daring,
By a gallant boy in blue,
Who carried the flag in the fighting days
Of eighteen sixty-two.

Come to Antietam's fertile field,
Where now our well-trained army waits,
To battle in a loyal cause
Against the flower of rebel States.
See where they stand, the nation's shield,
A bulwark firm, a weapon strong.
Though many a State hath filled that field,
One flag doth claim their patriot song.
The sturdy lumberman is there
With sinew, bone, and brain as strong
As when, in Maine, his axe rang clear,
Or on frail raft he moved along.
Iowa's sons, Green Mountain boys,
Rhode Island's flower, New Hampshire's pride,
The lusty men of Illinois,
Are fitly marshalled, side by side.
And there, too, Massachusetts shows
Her regiments with well-filled ranks,
Free from the soil where freedom grows;
From Lowell's mills, and Cape Cod's banks.
And midst them stands young Reuben Bright,
Bearing the flag that's now defied
By treason's boasted power and might;
The southron's scorn; the northman's pride.

The flag that nobly he hath borne
On many a bloody field of fight;
But crimson stained, and bullet torn,
It waves yet proudly in the light.
'Twas borne by Rappahannock's stream;
It bravely shone in Bull Run fight;
And Malvern Hill beheld its gleam
Along the bloody front of fight.
In many a strife, on many a field,
Reuben had borne it, long and well;
Sworn to protect it, never to yield,
Until his corse beside it fell.
But see! Along the marshalled ranks
The belching cannons loudly peal;
While eager hands, and brave, true hearts,
War's fiercest inspiration feel.
An answering peal from southern ranks,
The battle-trump has sounded.
The drums' loud beat, the steeds' quick tramp,
There fall the dead and wounded.
The troops are moving up the hill,
Across yon valley now,
With fierce "Hurrah!" and stubborn will,
They climb the mountain's brow.
Now they advance! now back they fall,
Once more: that spot is gained!
God send them victory at their call;
Our cause must be maintained.
Now comes a charge. The bugles sound,
A cheer, and off they go —
For speedy victory's ever found
Where leads on true old "Fighting Joe."
See on the bridge, they fiercely strive —
We've gained it — no, 'tis lost!
Once more brave hearts their columns rive,
Nor stop to count the cost.
Another fierce and quick affray —
By Heavens! the bridge is ours!
Where trusty generals lead the way,
Our victories come in showers.

But darkness closes on the fight,
The cannon's fearful voice is hushed,

The damp dews fall, the chilly night
Hath war's inhuman spirit crushed.
The cold, bleak winds creep 'tween the hills,
O'er wounded and o'er dying,
Where, struggling 'gainst death's fearful chills,
Our gallant troops are lying.
There gleam the fires of Union camp,
Where wearied soldiers seek repose;
While, farther south, the sentry's tramp
Gives safety to our sleeping foes.
Yonder, from midst a stricken band,
A soldier gains his feet again;
And searching where, on every hand,
In heaped confusion lie the slain,
Seeks for some comrade yet alive,
To learn how fares the flag he bore,
If yet 'gainst foes its bright folds strive,
Or if its glorious march is o'er.
Hark! at his feet a stifled groan,
Where two poor wounded soldiers rest.
Comes from his lips a bitter moan,
For one's his comrade, Harry West.
Good, faithful friends they long had been,
Brave Harry West and Reuben Bright.
They many a hard-fought fight had seen,
And camped together many a night.
As Reuben kneels beside his friend,
The soldier's dark eyes open wide,
And a quick look of friendship send
To him who kneeleth by his side.
He faintly speaks: "Thanks, comrade, thanks!
I scarce can see your honest face;
For Death hath called, and in his ranks
I soon shall fill a waiting place.
Reuben, the flag you have loved so well,
Was seized by our southern foe;
'Twas snatched from your grasp, as down you fell
By a sabre's blinding blow.
Remember your promise, Reuben Bright,
To keep it untarnished, floating high
In the deadly rain of the fiercest fight,
Until your corse should beside it lie."
The soldier sank back to his mossy bed,

The death mark on his face.
His march was o'er, his spirit fled
To take in heaven "the waiting place."

Reuben arose when the cavalry tramp
Was heard on the still night air,
And bound for the far-off rebel camp
A band of horsemen appear.
Close by where Reuben stands they go,
And as they pass him by,
A riderless war-horse, moving slow,
Behind he does espy.
With one quick thought he boldly leaps
Upon the charger's back —
And closely to the band he keeps,
And follows in their track,
Sworn to reclaim, or his life to sell
For the starry banner he loved so well.

Round the rebel camp-fires,
At the close of the bloody fight,
While its fitful flame flies higher,
Illumining the night,
Are gathered of foemen a host,
Boasting deeds of valor done,
Though they knew the day was lost,
And the field by the foe was won.
And one waves a tattered flag,
With a grin of fierce delight:
'Tis the captured sign of a regiment,
Once borne by Reuben Bright.
"Look on my trophy, comrades mine,"
The ragged trooper cries;
"See here the Yankee flag divine,
The flag that ever flies;
I tore it from a mudsill's hand,
In the fierce of the fight to-day;
It waves no more in chivalry's land,
To show our foes the way.
The emblem of a Yankee crew,
Of scholars, knaves, and croakers,
Of shopmen and mechanics, too,
Of lawyers and of brokers.

It waves no more upon the land,
But burns in yonder fire.
I'd serve just so the cursèd band,
Or else I am a liar."
The flag is raised; one moment now,
And in the flames it lies,
When from the crowd, with darkened brow,
A horseman quickly flies.
With one quick blow the boaster's hurled
Upon the flaming heap,
In air the standard's quickly whirled,
As back the soldiers leap.
A moment, and the daring man
Flies fiercely o'er the plain.
Catch him! ye traitors, if you can!
Secure your prize again.
Ride! Reuben, ride! urge on your horse!
Your foes are mounting fast.
Strain every nerve, sweep on your course,
Or this night is your last!
They're coming fast; their eager tramp
Comes plain and plainer now.
Ride, Reuben, for the Union camp,
That lies a mile below.
The shots come thick, but yet I catch
The waving banner's gleam,
While many riders fierce to snatch
Almost upon it seem.
Ride, Reuben, ride! You're nearing fast
The Union camp-fire's light.
Your dangerous ride will soon be past,
Your rescued flag beam bright.
Ride, Reuben, ride! Away! away!
By Heavens! how near they seem!
How fierce the pistol flashes play!
How bright the sabres gleam!
They're gathering in to sweep you back;
Loose, loose, and lash your steed.
A hundred foes are on your track,
Of courage you have need.
Lash! lash! away, drive, drive your heels
Deep in his steaming sides.
Ride! Reuben, ride! your good steed feels

For life his driver rides.
 He's off again. How swift he flies!
 I hear the sentry's tramp;
 Speed, Reuben, for your safety lies
 Within yon sleeping camp.
 One moment, and the sentry's beam,
 One, and the danger's past.
 Now, gather up, and o'er yon stream, —
 Ha! ha! the camp at last!
 The flag is ours, brave Reuben Bright,
 'Twas fairly, nobly won.
 'Twill wave again in many a fight:
 Your duty you have done.

God bless the flag our fathers gave,
 And grant it long may wave!
 God bless the true and gallant men
 Who'd die that flag to save!

G. M. Baker.

JOHN'S MISTAKE.

WITH sombre mien and thought-beclouded brow,
 He laid aside the paper that e'en now
 Had solely his attention occupied,
 And then with trembling hand he brushed aside
 The single tear, that was so very small
 One well might doubt its presence there at all.

“What is it, John?” inquired his anxious wife,
 The partner of his joys and woes through life;
 “What gloomy passage was it that you read?
 Our friends, my dear — ah! surely none are dead?
 Quick! speak! relieve my heart of painful doubt!
 What is it that you feel so sad about?”

“Wife,” he replied, and drew her on his knee,
 “Before you saw and fell in love with me,
 A score of maidens, first and last, I think,
 Had also fallen over the same brink;
 And one there was, whose name to-night I see
 Among the married. Once she loved but me.

“But as I could not wed with more than one,
I married you, and Kate was left alone.
And I am thinking now of all the years
In store for her, all fraught with bitter tears;
For women, dear, do not so soon forget,
And in her heart, no doubt, she loves me yet.

“And now I learn that she, through pique or spite,
Was married to Tom Jones on yesternight —
As if Tom Jones could ever me replace,
Or from her heart her love for me erase.
Of course, I feel myself somewhat to blame
That Kate so suddenly should change her name.”

Then, with a merry laugh, his wife replied,
“Oh, John, do cease!” then laughed until she cried,
Then cried until again she laughed with glee;
While John, quite mystified, declared that he
Had ne’er beheld such conduct in his wife,
And hoped he never would again through life.

“But John,” she cried, “do listen while I tell
How long Kate loved you, and — oh, my! — how well.
She and I, you know, were girls together,
And always told our secrets to each other;
And once she told me, John, that you in vain
Had sought her hand;” and then she laughed again.

“And, John, she said — but don’t be angry, dear —
That she refused you, and expressed a fear
That you some acts of rashness would commit,
And begged me love you just a little bit.
And so I tried; you know the sequel, dear,
You turned from her to me; ’twas very queer.”

John bit his lips in ill-concealed distaste,
And something murmured low of “youth,” “haste,”
And “boyish fancies,” and “a girl’s conceit,”
Too indistinctly uttered to repeat.
But you and I, of course, with half a look,
See that John wore his boot on the wrong foot.

And Mrs. John, within her merry breast,
 Regarded John's mistake too good a jest
 To keep. So, after many an earnest charge
 That I should keep it from the world at large,
 She told it me; but I, being rather weak,
 Have found the secret far too strong to keep.

Molly Brande.

THE ATTRIBUTES OF WASHINGTON.

FOR 22D OF FEBRUARY EXERCISES.

When used for exhibitions a large shield should be set up at back of stage, decorated with evergreen or flowers. On this insert ten hooks at regular intervals. The Goddess of Liberty discovered centre; right, five young ladies; left, the same number. The Goddess recites the opening stanza. Then, from each side alternately, a young lady recites a verse. At its conclusion hangs on the shield the letter of her attribute, W. for wisdom, etc., so that at the conclusion the name of "Washington" appears on the shield. The last stanza to be recited in unison.

(The Goddess of Liberty, solus.)

ANOTHER year hath o'er our country rolled,
 Bearing rich blessings into Freedom's fold,
 Breaking to brilliant hues the darkening cloud,
 That stretched o'er all the land oppression's shroud;
 From off the slave the clanking fetters fall,
 And brightly justice smiles alike on all.
 On sea and land, our arms victorious blaze,
 And fill all hearts with gratitude and praise.
 Thrice welcome, then, the day whose quick return
 Makes glad the heart where patriot fires burn,
 And bids remembrance backward point afar,
 To him, the first in peace, and first in war,
 And warmer title, truthful now as then,
 First in the hearts of all his countrymen.
 What honors can we pay unto his name,
 How count his virtues, how extol his fame?

Help me, fair sisters of the virtues rare,
To crown this day, an offering to prepare.
Bring choicest attributes of Hero's fame,
And with their brightness crown our father's name.

WISDOM.

Leader in battle, first in chair of state,
Great in the conflict, in the senate great.
This virtue, beaming bright, shall ever stand,
Wisdom to guide, to conquer, to command.

ACTION.

Prompt in all measures for his country's weal,
The tyrant foe was made his power to feel,
Surprising blows where slumbering foemen lay,
Action is quick when wisdom points the way.

STRENGTH.

No idle schemes with fruitless meaning fraught,
In his rich mind a loitering presence sought.
Duty's resolves found there this weapon bright —
Strength to perform whate'er he thought was right.

HONOR.

No politician's arts his aim could swerve,
No traitorous thought his brilliant mind subserve.
True to his country at his country's call,
Honor, a star that guided him through all.

INTEGRITY.

No little evil, greater good to gain,
Doth on his name leave its polluting stain.
In honest purpose every deed was planned,
Integrity the power that did command.

NOBILITY.

Serving the right, his country and his God,
Bending no knee to tyrant's awful nod;
With quick compassion for the wronged to feel,
Nobility upon him set its seal.

GREATNESS.

So pure in spirit, for no selfish ends,
Seeking the fame that o'er thy loved name bends,
Your aim was but to make your country free,
Greatness hath found its masterpiece in thee.

TRUTH.

Ever at his mother's knee were lessons taught,
Glowing with power, and redolent with thought;
An attribute with richest blessing rife,
Truth was the guiding star through all his life.

ORDER.

Another virtue that doth brightly beam,
Where'er his greatness on the hearth doth gleam;
A little word, but then how great its power,
Orders were made to guide each rolling hour.

NATIONALITY.

No foreign power could tempt his heart away
From where his country's bleeding bosom lay.
And she, thus loved, shall ever round him blaze
Nationality's triumphant rays.

Thus crowning virtues warmest tribute pay
Upon our father's welcome natal day.
Bearing the flowers his life hath made to bloom,
And waft o'er all the land their rich perfume.
Telling of greatness, goodness, and of truth,
That never die, but ever keep their youth.
Long may they bloom, while grateful hearts shall tell,
The Father of his Country here doth dwell.

G. M. Baker.

DECORATION DAY.

WE live to-day, our country lives, the hours of peace are
come,
And hushed the startling cannon's voice, the long roll of
the drum;
Spake the great chieftain — gone on high — in whom we
placed our trust:
“Break ranks, brave boys, the day is won, the traitors
kneel in dust.”

A shout went up — 'twas loud and long — the glad shout of
the free;
It echoed through our Northern pines, and by the Huron
sea;
It mingled with the sea-birds' scream upon our ragged
shore,
And for the moment almost stilled the wild Niagara's roar.
It leaped across our prairies green — the dark Sierra's
snow;
Was heard with joy where Western waves o'er golden peb-
bles flow;
And even in the fiery South, crazed children of the sun
In secret silence blest the hour when war's sad strife was
done.

Freedom was won, rebellion crushed, and from our banners
then
The shameful stain was washed away by blood of gallant
men;
For thousands left their peaceful homes, their dear loved
land to save,
And bravely fought — our flag unsoiled — but found them-
selves a grave.

“Break ranks!” alas! the ranks were broke in many a
bloody fray,
And many a corse on shell-torn fields in ghastly pallor lay;
The glory and the triumph theirs — the noble boon was
ours —
And so, with grateful hearts, this day we strew their tombs
with flowers.

We bring our fairest garlands now to scatter on the grave
Of him who laid his young life down, his country's life to
save.

Death is the lot of all — ah me! and hopefully we pray,
That we may sleep as sweetly as our heroes sleep to-day.

Toll, toll, ye bells! the solemn sound strikes sadly on the
ear,

Yet mourn we not for them, nor shed the unavailing tear.
A gentler tribute pay we now to those who made us free —
We bring sweet flowers to deck their tombs, and they will
fadeless be.

The rock from out our granite hills by skilful hands is
riven;

Our children's names are on the shield, the summit points
to heaven;

Through coming time 'twill brave the blast — be kissed by
summer showers,

And grateful hearts each year will wreathe the shaft with
fairest flowers.

W. S. Morton.

"DON'T SLOP OVER."

"DON'T slop over!" the old man said,
As he placed his hand on the young man's head;
"Go it! by all means; go it fast!
Go it while hair and hide or horse
Will hold together! Oh! go it, of course:
Go it as rapid as you can,
But don't slop over! my dear young man.

"Don't slop over! You will find some day
That keeping an eye to the windward will pay.
A horse may run a little too long;
A preacher preach just a fraction too long;
And a poet who pleases the world with rhymes
May write and regret it in after times.
Keep the end of the effort in view,
And don't slop over! whatever you do.

Don't slop over! The wisest men
Are bound to slop over now and then :
And yet the wisest, at work or feast,
Are the very ones who blunder the least.
Those who for spilt milk never wail
Are the ones who carry the steadiest pail.
Wherever you go, go in for the fat,
And don't slop over! freeze to that.

Don't slop over! Distrust yourself,
Nor always reach to the highest shelf;
The next to the highest will generally do,
And answer the needs of such as you ;
Climb, of course, but always stop
And take breath a little this side of the top.
And so you will reach it in winds and storms
Without slopping over. Thus ends my song.

THE BLUE COAT OF THE SOLDIER.

You asked me, my little one, why I bowed,
Though never I passed the man before ;
Because my heart was full and proud
When I saw the old blue coat he wore.

I know not, I, what weapon he chose,
What chief he followed, what badge he wore ;
Enough that in the front of foes
His country's blue great-coat he wore.

Perhaps he was born in a forest hut,
Perhaps he had danced on a palace floor ;
To want or wealth my eyes were shut,
I only marked the coat he wore.

It mattered not much if he drew his line
From Shem or Ham in the days of yore ;
For surely he was a brother of mine,
Who for my sake the war-coat wore.

He might have no skill to read or write,
Or he might be rich in learned lore;
But I knew he could make his mark in fight,
And nobler gown no scholar wore.

It may be he could plunder and prowl,
And perhaps in his mood he scoffed and swore;
But I would not guess a spot so foul
On the honored coat he bravely wore.

He had worn it long and borne it far;
And perhaps on the red Virginia shore,
From midnight chill till the morning star,
That worn great-coat the sentry wore.

When hardy Butler reigned his steed
Through the streets of proud, proud Baltimore,
Perhaps behind him, at his need,
Marched he who yonder blue coat wore.

Perhaps it was seen in Burnside's ranks,
When Rappahannock ran dark with gore;
Perhaps in the burning sun with Banks,
The blue great-coat no more he wore.

Perhaps in the swamps was a bed for his form,
From the seven days' battling and marching sore;
Or with Kearney and Pope 'mid the steely storm,
As the night closed in, that coat he wore.

Or when right over, as Jackson dashed,
That collar or cape some bullet tore;
Or when far ahead Antietam flashed,
He flung to the ground the coat that he wore.

Or stood at Gettysburg, where the graves
Rang deep to Howard's cannon roar;
Or saw with Grant the unchained waves
Where conquering hosts the blue coat wore.

That garb of honor tells enough,
Though I his story guess no more;
The heart it covers is made of such stuff,
That coat is mail which that soldier wore.
Rt. Rev. Geo. Burgess.

TWO OF A KIND.

WHEN the sleepy old town of Gettysburg was electrified into the most vigorous life in the last days of June, 1863, by the knowledge that Lee's army would soon be in its streets, the telegraph operator realized that, both for his own personal convenience and as a patriotic duty, he should be absent and take with him his telegraph instrument. Accordingly, he prepared a swift horse, intending to remain until the last moment, and then flee as fast as his horse could take him. At last a messenger, breathless with haste, brought the word that the Confederate cavalry advance was in sight, and, just as they appeared at the end of the street, the operator, having sent northward a hurried message, cut the wires, tore his instrument from its table, and, mounting his horse, disappeared in the other direction. As was expected, the telegraph office was the first place visited by the Confederate advance guard. It was in a little dry-goods store on the main street, just opposite the Lutheran Church, so soon to be a hospital. The store was owned by two maiden sisters, who lived above it, and who had closed their doors and retreated upstairs on seeing the Confederate advance. The officer in command, certain he was at the right place, knocked loudly. "Miss Mary" opened an upper window, and asked what was wanted. Her idea was to gain every possible minute for the operator; but so imperious was the summons to open the door, and so vigorous were the kicks that were rained upon it, that she thought it best to delay but little.

"You have taken your time, madam," said the officer, sternly, when at last they faced each other at the threshold. "Where is the operator?" he continued, as he entered, and saw the severed wires on the little desk.

"Gone," she answered, with trembling lips.

"Gone where?"

"I — I — don't know. He went away on horseback" —

The officer's eyes flashed. He drew a pistol from his belt, and made a suggestive movement as he repeated his question.

"I don't know," again answered Miss Mary.

"How long has he been gone?"

Miss Mary hesitated. Falsehood was foreign to her open nature. But to tell the truth might, probably would, result in the capture of the operator and his instrument, and through that possible danger to the Union cause by false messages being sent, or the capture of important Union news. The poor woman had no time to reason the matter with her conscience — yet she still hesitated. The pistol was raised.

"Answer me," said the officer, "and mind, now, the truth."

"About two hours and a half or three hours," she stammered, in an agony of terror.

The officer watched her face a moment, and then lowered his weapon.

"Who else is in the house?" he demanded, after a moment's pause.

"My sister."

She went into the back room. She meant to go upstairs and bring her sister, but the captain sternly ordered her to call her. He meant to allow no conference.

Miss Jane came down the stairs and faced him. Again he asked what had become of the operator. Miss Mary saw the awful danger in which her falsehood had placed her. But all fear had now left her, though she listened for the reply as if it might be her own death warrant.

"He cut the wires, took the instrument, and rode away on horseback."

"How long ago?"

The question was emphasized, as before, by a movement toward his pistol. Miss Jane saw it, but gave no sign. She raised her eyes, looked him calmly in the face, and said, very quietly, —

"About two hours and a half or three hours."

The officer's face fell. He put up his pistol, muttered an apology for his stern manner and threatening actions, and proceeded to search the house, of course without avail.

The answers of the two sisters were purely accidental, and the coincidence of the surely excusable falsehoods was a joy to both of them.

THE MAN FROM EUROPE.

I RAN across what first struck me as a very singular genius on my road from Springfield to Boston. This was a stout, black-whiskered man, who sat immediately in front of me, and who indulged from time to time in the most strange and unaccountable manœuvres. Every now and then he would get up and hurry away to the narrow passage which leads to the door in these drawing-room cars, and when he thought himself secure from observation would fall to laughing in the most violent manner, and continue the healthful exercise until he was as red in the face as a lobster.

As we neared Boston these demonstrations increased in violence, save that the stranger no longer ran away to laugh, but kept his seat and chuckled to himself, with his chin down deep in his shirt-collar. But the changes that those portmanteaus underwent. He moved them here, there — he put them behind him. He was evidently getting ready to leave, but as we were twenty-five miles from Boston, the idea of such early preparations was ridiculous. If he had entered the city then, the mystery would have remained unsolved, but the stranger became so excited that he could keep his seat no longer. Some one must help him, and as I was the nearest to him he selected me. Suddenly turning, as if I had asked a question, he said, rocking himself to and fro in his chair in the mean time, and slapping his legs together, and breathing hard: —

“Been gone three years!”

“Ah!”

“Yes, been in Europe. Folks don’t expect me for three months yet, but I got through and started. I telegraphed them at the last station — they’ve got it by this time.”

As he said this he rubbed his hands, and changed the portmanteau on his left to the right, and the one on the right to the left again.

“Got a wife?” said I.

“Yes, and three children,” he returned.

He then got up and folded his overcoat anew, and hung it over the back of the seat.

“You are pretty nervous over the matter, ain’t you?” I said, watching his fidgety movements.

"Well, I should think so," he replied; "I hain't slept soundly for a week. And do you know," he went on, glancing around at the passengers, and speaking in a low tone, "I am almost certain this train will run off the track and break my neck before I get to Boston. Well, the fact is, I have had too much good luck for one man lately. The thing can't last; 'tain't natural that it should, you know. I've watched it. First it rains, then it shines, then it rains again. It rains so hard you think it's never going to stop; then it shines so bright you think it's always going to shine; and just as you are settled in either belief, you are knocked over by a change, to show that you know nothing about it."

"Well, according to that philosophy," I said, "you will continue to have sunshine, because you are expecting a storm."

"It's curious," he returned, "but the only thing which makes me think I will get through safe is because I think I won't."

"Well! this is curious," said I.

"Yes!" he replied. "I am a machinist — made a discovery — nobody believed in it — spent all my money trying to bring it out — mortgaged my home — all went. Everybody laughed at me — everybody but my wife — spunky little woman — said she would work her fingers off before I should give it up. Went to England — no better there — came within an ace of jumping off the London bridge. Went into a workshop to earn money enough to come home with — there I met the man I wanted. To make a long story short, I've brought £50,000 home with me, and here I am."

"Good for you!" I exclaimed.

"Yes," said he, "£50,000, and the best of it is she don't know anything about it. I've fooled her so often, and disappointed her so much, that I just concluded I would say nothing about this. When I got my money, though, you better believe I struck a bee line for home."

"And now, I suppose, you will make her happy?"

"Happy!" he replied, "why, you don't know anything about it; she's worked like a dog since I have been gone, trying to support herself and the children decently. They paid her thirteen cents apiece for making white shirts, and that is the way she'd live half the time. She'll come down

there to the depot to meet me in a gingham dress and a shawl a hundred years old, and she'll think she's dressed up. Oh, she won't have no clothes after this — oh, no, I guess not!"

And with these words, which implied that his wife's wardrobe would soon rival Queen Victoria's, the stranger tore down the passageway again, and, getting in his old corner, where he thought himself out of sight, went through the strangest pantomime, laughing, putting his mouth into the drollest shape, and then swinging himself back and forth in the limited space as if he were "walking down Broadway" a full-rigged metropolitan belle.

So on we rolled into the depot, and I placed myself on the other car, opposite the stranger, who, with a portmanteau in his hand, descended, and was standing on the lowest step, ready to jump to the platform.

I looked from his face to the faces of the people before us, but saw no sign of recognition. Suddenly he cried: —

"There they are!"

Then he laughed outright, but in a hysterical sort of way, as he looked over the crowd. I followed his eye, and saw, some distance back, as if crowded out and shouldered away by the well-dressed and elbowing throng, a little woman in a faded dress, and a well-worn hat, with a face almost painful in its intense but hopeful expression, glancing rapidly from window to window as the coaches glided in.

She had not yet seen the stranger, but a moment after she caught his eye, and in another instant he had jumped to the platform with his two portmanteaus, and, making a hole in the crowd, pushing one here and there, and running one of his bundles plump into the well-developed stomach of a venerable-looking old gentleman in spectacles, he rushed toward the place where she was standing. I think I never saw a face assume so many different expressions in so short a time as did that of the little woman while her husband was on his way to her.

She didn't look pretty; on the contrary, she looked very plain, but somehow I felt a big lump rise in my throat as I watched her. She was trying to laugh, but, God bless her, how completely she failed in the attempt! Her mouth got into the position, but it never moved after that, save to draw down at the corners and quiver, while she

blinked her eyes so fast that I suspect she only caught occasional glimpses of the broad-shouldered fellow who elbowed his way so rapidly toward her. And then, as he drew close and dropped those everlasting portmanteaus, she just turned completely round, with her back toward him, and covered her face with her hands. And thus she was when the strong man gathered her up in his arms, as if she had been a baby, and held her, sobbing, to his breast.

There was enough gaping at them, Heaven knows, and I turned my eyes away a moment, and then I saw two boys in threadbare roundabouts standing near, wiping their eyes and noses on their little coat-sleeves, and bursting out anew at every fresh demonstration on the part of their mother.

When I looked at the stranger again, he had his hat drawn over his eyes; but his wife was looking up at him, and it seemed as if the pent-up tears of those weary months of waiting were streaming through her eyelids.

THE LEGEND OF INNISFALLEN.

THE Abbot of Innisfallen
Arose from his couch to pray
Ere ever the first faint flush of dawn
Stole over the twilight gray;
While the peace of the great night angel
In the air was still abroad,
And no world-clamor could jar the wings
That lifted his soul to God.

Oh, fair on Killarney's water
The isle like a blossom lay,
And fair in its bosom the abbey walls
Rose up with their turrets gray;
But the inner soul of the beauty
Illumined the chapel air
When the sunrise streamed through the oriel pane
On the Abbot's morning prayer.

But once, ere the golden dawning,
The low words died away,
For a strange song rose on the outward air,
And the monk could no longer pray.
In vain he murmured an *ave*,
And pressed to the shrine more near,
His soul was drawn with a mystic spell,
And he could not choose but hear.

“The sweet, sweet voice is calling,
It calleth my soul to greet!”
And forth in the hueless morning
He hurried with trembling feet.
“I must gaze on the soul that singeth,
Though an angel or fiend it be;
May Christ, who was tempted himself on earth,
Have pity, and pardon me!”

He saw in the dusky twilight
A wonderful snow-white bird;
The air glowed softly around its wings,
And thrilled as the music stirred.
Slowly it flew before him,
And the Abbot followed on;
Scant choice have the feet but to overtake
When the eyes and the heart have gone.

And now through the silent forest,
And now by the silver lake,
O'er moor and meadow he followed still,
Through desolate fen and brake.
And if it were noon or evening, —
If moments or years went by, —
The monk knew not while he heard beyond
The voice of that melody.

But at last the abbey turrets
Rose up to his sight again;
He thought of his uncompleted prayer,
And the glamour cleared from his brain.
But the walls are old and crumbling!
And the ivy grown so high
He can scarcely see the oriel pane
Where he watched the morning sky!

And why are his limbs grown feeble?
His hands so thin and seamed?
And what are the locks like flying snow
Which over his shoulder streamed?
He entered the chapel doorway,
But the porter's face was strange;
Each passing form and familiar scene
Had suffered a wondrous change.

And never a monk in the abbey
Could tell his face or name,
But an aged man from his quiet cell,
With tottering footsteps came;
"When I was a boy," he murmured,
"They whispered the story o'er,
How the Father Anselm vanished away,
And they saw his face no more."

"It was I!" said the trembling Abbot,
While the startled monks were dumb;
"Oh, give to me absolution now,
For I know my hour is come."
They gave him the holy wafer,
And reverent laid him down,
Where the light fell soft on his wrinkled brow,
Like a gold and opal crown.

Then his breath came fainter and fainter,
And the awestruck watchers heard
The low, sweet call from the casement ledge
Of a strange and beauteous bird.
It perched on the couch of waiting;
The bells of the abbey tolled;
Then two birds rose to the azure sky,
And the monk lay still and cold.

Oh, what is the ancient legend
But the story of life for each?
To follow forever a shining hope
That beckons beyond our reach!
But I think when we fall a-weary,
And the long pursuit is past,
The beautiful vision we sought so long
Will stoop to our hand at last.

Minnie D. Batcham.

BU'STIN' THE TEMPERANCE MAN.

HOARSELY demanding "Gimme a drink!"

He sidled up to the bar,
And he handled his glass with the air of one
Who had often before "been thar;"
And a terrible glance shot out of his eyes,
And over his hearers ran,
As he muttered, "I'm hangin' around the town
Fer to bu'st that temperance man!"

"I've heered he's comin' with singin' an' sich,
An' prayin' an' heaps of talk;
An' allows he'll make all fellows what drink
Toe square the temperance chalk;
I reckon" — and here he pulled out a knife
That was two feet long or more,
And he handled his pistols familiarly,
While the crowd made a break for the door.

The good man came, and his voice was kind,
And his ways were sweet and mild;
"But I'm going to bu'st him," the roarer said,
"Jess wait till he gets me riled."
When he playfully felt of his pistol-belt,
And took up his place on the stage,
And waited in wrath for the temperance man
To further excite his rage.

But the orator didn't; he wasn't that sort,
For he talked right straight to the heart,
And somehow or other the roarer felt
The trembling teardrops start.
And he thought of the wife who loved him well,
And the children that climbed his knee,
And he said, as the terrible picture was drawn,
"He's got it kerrect — that's me!"

Then his thoughts went back to the years gone by,
When his mother had kissed his brow,
And she tearfully told of the evils of drink,
And he made her a solemn vow,

That he never should touch the poisonous cup
Which had ruined so many before ;
And the tears fell fast as he slowly said :
“ He’s ketchin’ me more and more ! ”

He loosened his hold on his pistols and knife,
And covered his streaming eyes,
And though it was homely, his prayer went up —
Straight up to the starlit skies.
Then he signed his name to the temperance pledge,
And holding it high, said he,
“ I came here to bu’st that temperance chap,
But I reckon he’s bu’sted me ! ”

Hosea Gough.

THE PRETTY MAID OF KISSIMMEE.

UPON the cars — in spirit gay,
As rapturous as could be —
I met a girl from Florida,
Who lives in Kissimmee.

Her eyes were like the sapphire’s blue,
Her hair was flowing free :
She asked if I was going, too,
To kiss — to Kissimmee.

I never knew the town before,
But she was fair to see,
And she had charms and gold galore —
This maid of Kissimmee.

We talked with most amazing speed,
And did not disagree ;
And still she urged, “ I trust, indeed,
You’re going to Kissimmee.”

I am not often dashed, I’m sure,
Nor prudish can I be —
But think I blushed when she said, “ You’re
Now going to Kissimmee ! ”

The cars were full — I tried to say

(She sat so close to me) :

“ Is there a tunnel on the way? ”

“ Oh, yes — to Kissimmee.”

“ Now, by old Ponce de Leon’s shade —

If any such there be ” —

I thought, “ I’ll kiss this pretty maid

As sure as she is she.”

Reaching a tunnel, near a curve,

She cried with vigorous shout

(For from my task I did not swerve) :

“ What are you, sir, about? ”

“ O maiden of the pretty face,

How can you angry be?

You said (although I ask for grace),

‘ You’re going to Kissimmee.’

“ I could not stand a hint like that —

And my mistake you see.”

She smiled — and smoothed her ruffled hat —

And turned to Kissimmee.

Joel Benton.

GRANDPA'S COURTSHIP.

It wasn't so very long ago, 'bout forty year, I guess,
That I first went a-courting Deacon Bodkins' darter Bess
(Or leastways Betsy was her name, but that ain't here nor
there).

She was an orful pretty gal, with yaller orbun hair,
An' cheeks as round an' rosy as any temptin' peach,
That makes a fellow smack his lips because it's out of
reach.

Hit was down in ole Missouri, an' I was keepin' batch,
When me an' Betsy Bodkins fust thought about a match ;

I had a little cabin, an' a good chunk of a hoss,
In Buck Crick bottom, 'side the crick, and Bodkins lived
across,
A mile or so on t'other side; an' when the crick was low
I used to ford it every day, to see my gal, you know.

The Deacon — wal, I reckon, now, that he was putty
square,
No better an' no wusser than other people air;
But then he wa'n't no favorite with me, and you kin guess
'Twas 'cause he couldn't see the p'int of me a-courtin'
Bess;
An' when he found that me an' her was wantin' to git
spliced,
He rared an' tore an' ordered me to git right up and h'iste.

The reason why he got so mad at me is easy told:
'Twas cause my trousers' pockets wasn't cluttered up with
gold.
He 'lowed that I had better clare, or he would raise a
breeze;
His darter shouldn't hev a man as poor as black-eyed peas.
Besides, thar was another chap, a drover, wanted Bess;
He had right smart of money, say a thousand, more or less.

But he was mortal humly, an' stubborn as a mule,
An' Bess declared she wa'n't a-goin' to hev no such a fool.
An' when the Deacon rared an' pitched, an' ordered me
away,
She up and vowed, emphatic like, that she would never
stay
To marry any drover that ever wore a hat.
An' what the deacon's darter said she meant, and that was
flat!

The Deacon's wife, Aunt Polly, she sort o' favored me,
An' allus made me welcome, when he warn't there to see;
An' when the Deacon rared an' swowed that Bess should
marry Si —
(The drover's name was Silas) — or he'd know the reason
why,
Aunt Polly sided 'long of Bess, an' — wal, I'm free to say,
We got our plans all ready, fur we 'lowed to run away.

So Bess she slipped away one day an' met me in the lane;
The roads was awful muddy, fur there'd been a power of
rain,

But she clumb up behind me—my horse would carry
two—

An' off we went toward the crick, the nighest distance
through;

Fur I 'lowed that we could ford it, bein' Jeff, my hoss, was
stout,

But when we reached the ford, I see my reckonin' was out;
For the rain had riz the crick up, till it got so mortal high
I see we couldn't ford it, an' it wa'n't no use to try.

An' jest that very minute, while we was standin' still,
We heard the sound of horses' hoofs a-tearin' down the hill!
An' Bess, she gives a little screech, and lit right off the
hoss,

Fur 'twas her pa a-comin' with the drover, Silas Cross!

An'—wal, I had to 'lect my thoughts, and that most 'maz-
ing quick,

So I jest made a grab for Bess, an' jumped right in the
crick.

The water biled around us, but I struck out fur the shore,
An' I swum as I don't reckon I had ever swum before:
But we got acrost, an' there we stood, a-shakin' with the
cold,

An' Bess's hair fell down her back, jest like a shower of
gold

But we was safe, an' so went an' found some friends of
Bess,

An' I went fer the preacher, while they helped her change
her dress.

There wa'n't no licenses them times, an' 'twasn't long till
we

Was man an' wife, an' started home, as happy as could be.

An' who should be there waitin', at the bars, but Jeff, my
hoss;

I knowed 'twas safe to leave him, an' he'd foller me across.

An'—wal, there ain't much more to tell, but in about a
week

The Deacon he came walkin' in a-lookin' powerful meek,

An' arter we had all shuck hands, he says: "That Silas Cross,
 Would you believe he was so mean? He went an' stole my hoss!
 He did! — the finest hoss I had, the rascally, thievin' cuss!
 But then, if he had married Bess, 'twould been a blamed sight wuss.

"An', Hiram, sence you swum that crick, I thought that I an' you
 Would make good pardners, after all, and Polly thinks so, too;
 An' though you stole my darter Bess, I reckon 'twan't no sin;
 So come with me, fur Polly wants to see her gal ag'in."
 Wal children, that's the story I've bin promisin' to you,
 An' you can ask your grandma if I haven't told it true!
Helen Whitney Clark.

THE FIREMAN.

THE city slumbers. O'er its mighty walls
 Night's dusky mantle, soft and silent, falls;
 Sleep o'er the world slow waves its wand of lead,
 And ready torpors wrap each sinking head.
 Stilled is the stir of labor and of life;
 Hushed is the hum and tranquillized the strife.
 Man is at rest, with all his hopes and fears;
 The young forget their sports, the old their cares;
 The grave are careless; those who joy or weep
 All rest contented on the arm of sleep.
 Sweet is the pillowed rest of beauty now,
 And slumber smiles upon her tranquil brow;
 Her bright dreams lead her to the moonlit tide,
 Her heart's own partner wandering by her side;
 'Tis summer's eve; the soft gales scarcely rouse
 The low-voiced ripple and the rustling boughs;
 And, faint and far, some minstrel's melting tone
 Breathes to her heart a music like its own.

When, hark! O horror! what a crash is there!
 What shriek is that which fills the midnight air?
 'Tis fire! 'tis fire! She wakes to dream no more;
 The hot blast rushes through the blazing door;
 The dun smoke eddies round; and, hark! that cry:
 "Help! help! Will no one aid? I die, I die!"
 She seeks the casement; shuddering at its height
 She turns again; the fierce flames mock her flight;
 Along the crackling stairs they fiercely play,
 And roar, exulting, as they seize their prey.
 "Help! help! Will no one come?" She can no more,
 But, pale and breathless, sinks upon the floor.

Will no one save thee? Yes, there yet is one
 Remains to save, when hope itself is gone;
 When all have fled, when all but he would fly,
 The fireman comes to rescue or to die.
 He mounts the stair, — it wavers 'neath his tread;
 He seeks the room, flames flashing round his head;
 He bursts the door; he lifts her prostrate frame,
 And turns again to brave the raging flame.
 The fire-blast smites him with its stifling breath;
 The falling timbers menace him with death;
 The sinking floors his hurried step betray,
 And ruin crushes round his desperate way;
 Hot smoke obscures, ten thousand cinders rise,
 Yet still he staggers forward with his prize;
 He leaps from burning stair to stair. On! on!
 Courage! One effort more, and all is won!
 The stair is passed, — the blazing hall is braved;
 Still on! yet on! once more! *Thank Heaven, she's saved!*
Robert T. Conrad.

THE GALLEY SLAVE.

THERE lived in France, in days not long now dead,
 A farmer's sons, twin brothers, like in face;
 And one was taken in the other's stead,
 For a small theft, and sentenced in disgrace
 To serve for years a hated galley slave,
 Yet said no word, his prized good name to save.

Trusting remoter days would be more blessed,
He set his will to wear the verdict out,
And knew most men are prisoners at best,
Who some strong habit ever drag about,
Like chain and ball; then meekly prayed that he
Rather the prisoner he was should be.

But best resolves are of such feeble thread,
They may be broken in temptation's hands.
After long toil the guiltless prisoner said:
"Why should I thus, and feel life's precious sands
The narrow of my glass, the present, run,
For a poor crime that I have never done?"

Such questions are like cups, and hold reply;
For when the chance swung wide the prisoner fled,
And gained the country road, and hastened by
Brown furrowed fields and skipping brooklets, fed
By shepherd clouds, and felt 'neath sapful trees
The soft hand of the mesmerizing breeze.

Then, all that long day having eaten naught,
He at a cottage stopped, and of the wife
A brimming bowl of fragrant milk besought.
She gave it him; but as he quaffed the life,
Down her kind face he saw a single tear
Pursue its wet and sorrowful career.

Within the cot he now beheld a man
And maiden, also weeping. "Speak," said he,
"And tell me of your grief; for if I can,
I will disroot the sad, tear-fruited tree."
The cottar answered: "In default of rent,
We shall to-morrow from this roof be sent."

Then said the galley slave: "Whoso returns
A prisoner escaped may feel the spur
To a right action, and deserves and earns
Proffered reward. I am a prisoner!
Bind these my arms, and drive me back my way,
That your reward the price of home may pay."

Against his wish the cotter gave consent,
And at the prison-gate received his fee,
Though some made it a thing for wonderment
That one so sickly and infirm as he,
When stronger would have dared not to attack,
Could capture this bold youth and bring him back.

Straightway the cotter to the mayor hied,
And told him all the story, and that lord
Was much affected, dropping gold beside
The pursed sufficient silver of reward;
Then wrote his letter in authority,
Asking to set the noble prisoner free.

There is no nobler, better life on earth
Than that of conscious, meek self-sacrifice.
Such life our Saviour, in his lowly birth
And holy work, made his sublime disguise,
Teaching this truth, still rarely understood:
'Tis sweet to suffer for another's good.

Henry Abbey.

SAVED BY PETTICOATS.

A MEMBER of the Twenty-fifth New York Cavalry tells a good story of his failure to capture a noted Confederate scout, William Baxter, known as "Billy Bowlegs," at a time when he was known to be visiting his mother's house near a little Virginia village about eleven miles from Harper's Ferry.

"The scout had been described to us as of slender build, medium height, fair complexion, and dark eyes. Enough was known about his nerve to know that he would not be taken alive if he had any show to fight; and, therefore, as we approached the house about midnight, from across a field, we were anxiously wondering how we should get at him. If we knocked at the door, he would be alarmed, and have time to arm himself. If we broke in, we might, and probably should, find him in bed. It was a still, clear night, rather cold, and we hung about for half an hour before adopting a plan. Then we decided to break in the

doors. Two of us went to the front door, and two to the back, while the fifth man stood ready to receive the scout in case he dropped from a second-story window, supposed to be in his bedroom. We crept softly up, and at a signal both doors were burst — no, they weren't! Neither of them gave an inch under the pressure, and in response to the efforts we made, a woman's voice called out, —

“ ‘Who is it, and what's wanted?’ ”

“ ‘Open the door, or we'll break it down!’ ”

“ ‘Wait one minute!’ ”

“ She struck a light, and we heard her moving about, and in a couple of minutes the front door was opened, and a gray-haired woman of forty-five stood there, with a candle in her hand.

“ ‘Union soldiers, eh? Come right in,’ she said, smiling, as if glad to see us.

“ I posted three of the men around the house, and entered with the other, and as soon as I was inside, I said, —

“ ‘Madam, we have come for your son. We know he is here. We shall take him, dead or alive.’ ”

“ ‘Oh, you have come for Billy, have you!’ exclaimed a girl about eighteen years of age, who came running down-stairs at that moment. ‘Excuse me, gentlemen, for not being fully dressed, but, you see, you didn't send us any word.’ ”

“ She laughed in a merry way, while the mother smiled good-naturedly. She had on a neat-fitting calico dress, a ribbon at her throat, and except that her hair looked ‘tumbled,’ she looked as well prepared as if she had expected our coming.

“ ‘Yes, Jennie, they want Billy,’ said the mother, as she placed the candle on a stand.

“ ‘And we are bound to take him, dead or alive!’ I added, in a loud voice, suspecting the scout was within hearing.

“ ‘Oh, how sorry!’ laughed the girl. ‘If brother Billy had only known you were coming! But he didn't, you see, and so he went away at dark. He'll never forgive himself — never!’ ”

“ ‘We must search the house,’ I said.

“ ‘Oh, certainly. Mammy, you light another candle, and I'll show the gentlemen around. Perhaps the sight of Billy's old clothes will do 'em good.’ ”

“Well, sir, we hunted that house from attic to cellar, and all we found was an old suit of Billy’s clothes. The scout had skipped, and the best I could do was to apologize to mother and daughter, accept a midnight luncheon at the hands of the latter, and take the back track for the river. I’ll own up, too, that I was ‘dead gone’ on Jennie before I left, and that I said to her, as I squeezed her hand at parting, —

“‘When the war is over, I’m coming to ask you to be my wife.’

“‘And — and — I’ll say — say y-e-s,’ she whispered in my ear.

“We got back to the ferry soon after daylight, and there met a Union farmer living neighbor to the widow. When he heard what we had been up to, he asked, —

“‘Was the widder all alone?’

“‘No; her daughter Jennie was there.’

“‘Daughter Jennie! Describe her.’

“‘Good-looking girl of medium height, black eyes and hair, and a sweet talker. I’m going back to marry her after the war is over.’

“‘Bet you a farm you don’t! That ’ar gal Jennie was nobody else but that ’ar scout, Billy Bowlegs! He jist jumped into some of his mammy’s clothes, and you pig-heads couldn’t see through it!’

“He was right. I met Billy at Harper’s Ferry after the war, and he wanted to know if I had taken out the marriage license yet.”

COUNTRY SLEIGHING.

A NEW STORY TO AN OLD TUNE.

IN January, when down the dairy
The cream and the clabber freeze,
When snowdrifts cover the fences over,
We farmers take our ease.
At night we rig the team,
And bring the cutter out;
Then fill it, fill it, fill it, fill it,
And heap the furs about.

Here friends and cousins dash up by dozens,
And sleighs at least a score ;
There John and Molly, behind, are jolly,
Nell rides with me, before.
All down the village street
We range us in a row ;
Now jingle, jingle, jingle, jingle,
And over the crispy snow !

The windows glisten, the old folks listen,
To hear the sleigh-bells pass ;
The fields grow whiter, the stars are brighter,
The road is smooth as glass.
Our muffled faces burn,
The clear north wind blows cold,
The girls all nestle, nestle, nestle,
Each in her lover's hold.

Through bridge and gateway we're shooting straightway,
Their tollman was too slow !
He'll listen after our song and laughter,
As over the hill we go.
The girls cry, Fie ! for shame ! —
Their cheeks and lips are red,
And so with kisses, kisses, kisses,
They take the toll instead.

Still follow, follow ! across the hollow
The tavern fronts the road.
Whoa, now ! all steady ! the host is ready —
He knows the country mode !
The irons are in the fire,
The hissing flip is got ;
So pour and sip it, sip it, sip it,
And sip it while 'tis hot.

Push back the tables, and from the stables
Bring Tom, the fiddler, in ;
All take your places, and make your graces,
And let the dance begin.

The girls are beating time,
 To hear the music sound ;
 Now foot it, foot it, foot it, foot it,
 And swing your partners round.

Last couple toward the left ! all forward !
 Cotillions through, let's wheel ;
 First tune the fiddle, then down the middle,
 In old Virginia Reel,
 Play Money Musk to close,
 Then take the " long *chassé*,"
 While in to supper, supper, supper,
 The landlord leads the way.

The bells are ringing, the hostlers bringing
 The cutters up anew ;
 The beasts are neighing ; too long we're staying,
 The night is half-way through.
 Wrap close the buffalo robes,
 We're all on board once more ;
 Now jingle, jingle, jingle, jingle,
 Away from the tavern door.

So follow, follow, by hill and hollow,
 And swiftly homeward glide.
 What midnight splendor ! how warm and tender
 The maiden by your side !
 The sleighs drop far apart,
 Her words are soft and low ;
 Now, if you love her, love her, love her,
 'Tis safe to tell her so.

Edmund C. Stedman.

OUR TWO OPINIONS.

Us two wuz boys when we fell out —
 Nigh to the age uv my youngest now ;
 Don't rec'lect what 'twuz about,
 Some small diff'rence, I'll allow.
 Lived next neighbors twenty years,
 A-hating each other, me 'nd Jim —
 He havin' his opinyin uv me,
 'Nd I havin' my opinyin uv him !

Grew up together 'nd wouldn't speak,
Court'd sisters, 'nd marr'd 'em, too ;
'Tended same meetin'-house oncet a week,
A-hatin' each other, through 'nd through !
But when Abe Linkern asked the West
F'r soldiers, we answered — me 'nd Jim —
He havin' his opinyin uv me,
'Nd I havin' my opinyin uv him !

But down in Tennessee one night
Ther wuz sound uv firin' ou' away,
'Nd the sergeant allowed there'd be a fight
With the Johnnie Rebs some time nex' day ;
'Nd as I wuz thinkin' uv Lizzie 'nd home,
Jim stood afore me, long 'nd slim —
He havin' his opinyin uv me,
'Nd I havin' my opinyin uv him !

Seemed like we knew there wuz goin' to be
Serious trouble f'r me 'nd him —
Uz two schuck hands, did Jim 'nd me,
But never a word from me or Jim !
He went his way, 'nd I went mine,
'Nd into the battle's roar went we —
I havin' my opinyin uv Jim,
'Nd he havin' his opinyin uv me.

Jim never come back from the war again,
But I hain't forgot that last, last night,
When waitin' f'r orders, uz two men
Made up 'nd schuck hands, afore the fight ;
'Nd, after all, it's soothin' to know
That here I be, 'nd yonder's Jim —
He havin' his opinyin uv me,
'Nd I havin' my opinyin uv him !

James Whitcomb Riley.

THE WATER-MILL.

LISTEN to the water-mill,
Through the livelong day;
How the clicking of the wheel
Wears the hours away.
Languidly the autumn wind
Stirs the withered leaves;
On the field the reapers sing,
Binding up the sheaves;
And a proverb haunts my mind,
And as a spell is cast, —
“ The mill will never grind
With the water that is past.”

Summer winds revive no more
Leaves strewn o'er earth and main,
The sickle never more shall reap
The yellow, garnered grain;
And the rippling stream flows on,
Tranquil, deep, and still;
Never gliding back again
To the water-mill.
Truly speaks the proverb old,
With a meaning vast:
“ The mill will never grind
With the water that is past.”

Take the lesson to thyself,
Loving heart, and true;
Golden years are fleeting by,
Youth is passing, too.
Learn to make the most of life,
Lose no happy day!
Time will ne'er return again
Sweet chances thrown away.
Leave no tender word unsaid —
But love while love shall last;
“ The mill will never grind
With the water that is past.”

Work, while yet the sun doth shine,
Men of strength and will!
Never does the streamlet glide
Unless by the mill.
Wait not till to-morrow's sun
Beams brightly on thy way;
All that thou canst call thine own
Lies in this word: "To-day!"
Power, intellect, and health
Will not always last:
"The mill will never grind
With the water that is past."

Oh! the wasted hours of life
That have swiftly drifted by!
Oh! the good we might have done!
Gone! lost without a sigh!
Love that we might once have saved
By a single kindly word!
Thoughts conceived, but ne'er expressed,
Perishing, unpenned, unheard!
Take the proverb to thy soul!
Take, and clasp it fast:
"The mill will never grind
With the water that is past."

Oh, love thy God and fellow-man,
Thyself consider last,
For come it will when thou must scan
Dark errors of the past.
And when the fight of life is o'er,
And earth recedes from view,
And heaven in all its glory shines
'Midst the good, the pure, the true —
Then you will see more clearly
The proverb, deep and vast:
"The mill will never grind
With the water that is past."

Sarah Doudney.

DER VATER-MILL.

I READS aboutt dot vater-mill dot runs der life-long day,
Und how der vater don'd eoom pack vhen vonce id flows
 away :

Und off der mill shtream dot glides on so beacefully und
 shtill,

Budt don'd vas putting in more vork on dot same vater-
 mill.

Der boet says, 'vas beddher dot you holdt dis broverb fast,
"Der mill id don'd vould grind some more mit vater dot
 vas past."

Dot boem id vas peautifful to read aboutt; dot's so !
Budt eef dot vater *vasn't* past how could dot mill wheel go?
Und vhy make drouble mit dot mill vhen id vas been in-
 clined

To dake each obbordunity dot's gifen id to grind?
Und vhen der vater cooms along in qvandidies so vast,
Id lets some oder mill dake oup der vater dot vas past.

Dhen der boet shange der subject, und she dells us vonce
 again :

"Der sickle neffer more shall reap der yellow, garnered
 grain."

Vell; vonce vas blendy, aind't id? Id vouldn't been so nice
To haf dot sickle reaping oup der same grain ofer twice!

Vhy, vot's der use off cutting oup der grass alreaty mown?
Id vas pest, mine moder dold me, to let vell enough alone.

"Der summer vinds refife no more leaves strewn o'er
 earth und main."

Vell; who vants to refife dhem? Dhere vas blendy more
 again!

Der summer vinds dhey shtep right oup in goot time to
 brepere

Dhose blants und trees for oder leaves; dhene soon vas
 creen vones dhere.

Shust bear dis adverb on your mindts, mine frendts, und
 holdt id fast :

Der new leaves don'd vas been aroundt undil der oldt vas
 past.

Dhen neffer mindt der leaves dot's dead; der grain dot's in
 der bin;
 Dhey both off dhem haf had dheir day, and shust vas gath-
 ered in.
 Und neffer mindt der vater vhen id vonce goes droo der
 mill;
 Ids vork vas done! Dhere's blendy more dot waits, ids
 blace to fill.
 Let each von dake dis moral, vrom der king down to der
 peasant:
 Don'd mindt der vater dot vas past, budt der vater dot vas
 bresent.

Charles Follen Adams.

BRUIN'S SECRET.

FROM ÆSOP'S FABLE.

Two friends, in sporting garb arrayed,
 Impatient, through a forest strayed
 In search of game, that, coy and shy,
 Cared not to face the marksman's eye;
 But shrunk with modesty or fear
 In tree, or bush, or burrow near,
 Watching with anxious glance the pair,
 Who hurried on with swaggering air.
 Said Brag, a hunter fierce and bold, —
 At least in speech, — "The day is cold.
 Oh, for a sharp and fierce affray
 With tiger grim or lion gray,
 To warm my blood! 'Tis my delight
 To meet my foes in deadly fight."
 "Well said," loud Bluster quick replied.
 "Count me as ready at your side
 In every danger, to defend
 Your life with mine, 'till both shall end."
 The pair shook hands; when just ahead
 A bear approached, with stealthy tread, —
 Her frame was large, her features hard, —
 With her two cubs on promenade.
 Although they looked both hale and hearty,

'Twas by no means a welcome party
 To our two friends, who, much dismayed,
 To save their lives an effort made,
 Not with bold front or lucky shot;
 Valor had flown — hard was their lot.
 Bluster with haste a tree upsprung,
 And breathless 'mid the branches hung.
 Brag dropped to earth, and fainting lay,
 To all intents old Bruin's prey.
 A lucky move; for he had heard it said
 That bears *forbear* to meddle with the dead.
 So with suspended breath he quiet lay,
 Until the beast had taken a survey.
 Muffling and snuffing at nose, ear, and heart,
 Bruin, reluctant, bade her cubs depart.
 And, quite convinced the man was cold and stiff,
 First dropped a tear, then walked off in a miff.
 When all was safe, the boaster left the tree,
 Approached his friend in great anxiety,
 To know the secret which old Shaggy-pate
 Did so mysteriously communicate.
 "For I observed," he said, "and thought it queer.
 Her mouth was very close unto your ear."
 "'Twas no great secret," Brag in sullen mood
 Replied, "yet her advice was good:
 'In keeping company you should beware
 Of those who have for self alone a care
 When troubles come; for their own safety search,
 Leaving their friends and fellows in the lurch.'"

George M. Baker.

THE DISCONTENTED FROGS.

AFTER ÆSOP.

ONCE on a time, in mythologic days,
 When frogs could talk as well as croak their lays,
 A score or more of discontents, grown proud
 By waxing plumper than the common crowd,
 For change of state,
 With much debate,
 To call a king arranged a slate.

A long petition, with immense parade,
Before great Jupiter was quickly laid,
Asking the god, if he'd a king to spare,
To send him down, their slimy lot to share.

Not put himself out
By searching about :
Any king out of business they'd hail with a shout.

Great Jove that day was in a merry mood —
A *jovial* humor (that pun's old, but good) ;
So seized a large and very heavy log,
And hurled it to the middle of the bog.

“ There's a king will do,
You croaking crew ;
Don't let me hear any more from you.”

The monarch dropped in such a dashing way
Among the frogs, who all expectant lay,
With quick gymnastic feats to right and left
His subjects sprang, of all their wits bereft,

In wild affright,
Far out of sight,
And silent were the “ voices of the night.”

At last the king lay very stiff and quiet.
One reckless frog, awake for sport or riot,
Reached the broad, regal shoulders at a vault,
And sported there, with many a somersault ;

And all the rest,
With equal zest,
Upon the torpid ruler did their best.

Soon, tiring of this ugly, sleepy thing,
They prayed to Jove, “ Do send us down a *king*,
Something that's lofty in the regal line —
A nobby monarch, something really fine,

Mighty, great Jove,
To guard as we rove,
With a heart that can take us all into its love.”

This time a stork was sent by crafty Jupe,
Who stalked among them with a hungry swoop,

Gobbling up subjects with a grim delight,
That showed at least a mighty appetite.

It made them start
To see the art
With which the king bestowed them near his heart.

Thus taken in, the frogs set up a roar :
“ Enough, enough of kings ! we want no more.
Give us again, O Jove, our former state ;
We want no *Cæsars*.” “ Croakers, all too late

You do repent :
My patience spent,
You must be governed by the king last sent.

“ Without a king you frogs were not content.
A king could do no harm to you was sent ;
He failed to please ; so let the matter rest,
And of the one you have now make the best,

Lest, in the race
For kingly grace,
You chance to get a worse one in his place.”
George M. Baker.

THE PIPING TIMES OF PEACE.

A COCK, from his own barnyard gone astray,
To an exalted spot once made his way,
And, perched upon a leafless, blasted tree,
His clarion crow sent forth both wild and free ;

A signal note,
That welcome smote
The ears of one who roamed remote.

A hungry fox, in quest of food,
In haste came dashing through the wood,
And stared amazed at Chanticleer,
Transported to so high a sphere ;
Then scratched his crown,
With puzzled frown,
To find some way to bring him down

At last his cunning found a wheedling voice :
 " O gallant rooster, let us now rejoice,
 For harmony and universal peace
 Have been proclaimed. Henceforth all wars must cease
 In flocks and herds,
 With beasts and birds,
 Are love and friendship ' household words.'

" The piping times of peace have really come :
 Descend, dear coz, and let me see you home,
 That I repentant courtesy may show :
 We'll talk these matters over as we go.
 With joy elate
 At such a state,
 To share with you I all impatient wait."

The tough old fowl to this made no reply,
 But in the distance fixed his roving eye
 So earnestly that Reynard must inquire
 What sight so much attention could inspire.
 " Yonder appear,"
 Said Chanticleer,
 " A pack of hounds fast drawing near."

" If that's the case," said Reynard, turning tail,
 " I must be off; there's mischief in their hail."
 " Be not in haste," says chuckling Chanticleer,
 " You know the piping times of peace are here,
 When fox and hound,
 Securely bound
 In love and friendship must be found."

" Yes, yes; I know," says Reynard, with a wink;
 " But yet 'tis hardly safe to wait, I think;
 For, though 'tis true, as I have just now said,
 This proclamation has been widely spread,
 To share its views
 Hounds may refuse :
 And, ten to one, they have not heard the news."

George M. Baker.

THE SILENT SYSTEM.

A COMEDY IN ONE ACT.

[Freely Englished from the French of A. Dreyfus.]

CHARACTERS: *As first acted at the Star Theatre, New York, Friday, March 29, 1889.*

Husband. C. Coquelin, de la Comédie-Française.

Wife. Agnes Booth, of the Madison Square Theatre Company.

Time. The present — and a little before 11 P.M.

Place. New York — and in the pleasant parlor of the happy pair.

SCENE. — *A small parlor, with a fireplace at back, and doors right and left. Two armchairs before the fireplace, and a sofa near the left door. Small table on the right, with ice-water pitcher and glass. The wife is discovered seated near the fireplace, doing needlework. She pauses for a moment and sighs. Then she resumes her work with impatience. The clock on the mantelpiece strikes eleven.*

WIFE. Eleven o'clock! And he isn't home yet! (Sighs again.) Eleven o'clock! (Noise of footsteps heard off.) Hark! Ah, at last!

(Takes up her work again. The door on the right opens, and the husband enters briskly and smiling, with his hands extended toward the wife. The wife does not move; she works on steadily. The husband pauses, surprised. He looks at her doubtfully. She seems calm, and if she has not looked up, it is because she has not heard him. He smiles again, and, going up to her on tiptoe, bends over her chair to kiss her on the neck. The wife then draws herself up stiffly, and looks at him frigidly. The husband at first starts back in astonishment. Then he steps toward her.)

WIFE (thrusting back her chair). Do not touch me!

(The husband is about to speak.)

WIFE (rising and recoiling). Do not dare to touch me, sir!

(She goes toward the door on the left. The husband hesitates, in doubt, following her with his eyes.)

WIFE (with her hand on the door). After your conduct to-night all is over between us forever!

(She opens the door and goes out. The husband darts after her, but the door slams in his face. He is astounded. What can this mean? What has happened? Is she in earnest, or in jest? Perhaps it is a joke, and she may be laughing now. He listens with his ear at the keyhole. He hears nothing. Something is wrong; there is a domestic hurricane blowing up. Well, he can stand it, and it will not be the first. He will let it blow over. He turns up to the fireplace, rubbing his hands with energy. Then he takes up the evening paper, throws himself on the sofa, and begins to read.)

WIFE (coming out of her room and standing before him). And how long do you suppose this sort of thing can go on?
(The husband is surprised.)

WIFE (explosively). How long do you think I will lead this life?

(The husband is more surprised.)

WIFE. Do you imagine that I can spend my evening alone waiting for you, and then be willing to go to a cold room, leaving you here calmly toasting your toes and reading a newspaper?

(The husband is about to rise.)

WIFE. Oh, don't move on my account, I beg. I could never forgive myself if I disturbed you! I don't doubt that you feel the need of rest after five hours passed out of the house!

(The husband is about to speak.)

WIFE (suddenly). I'm only sorry that I had to sit up for you. If I had known that you wouldn't come home until after midnight —

(The husband looks at the clock.)

WIFE (quickly). I beg your pardon! That clock is slow; it is at least an hour slow. It is now half-past twelve!

(The husband looks at his watch.)

WIFE. But what do you care how lonely I am! I suppose I must get used to your coming home at all hours of the night. When I accepted you I thought I was going to have a man for a husband — not an owl!

(The husband is about to protest.)

WIFE. But I suppose you men are all alike — birds of a

feather! Oh, I know you, and I am not taken in by your affected calmness. I know you have been up to some mischief this evening. I see it in your eyes.

(The husband is about to protest again.)

WIFE. Don't talk to me! I know you, I say, — and there isn't anything you are not capable of!

(The husband smiles.)

WIFE. Oh, you can smile and smile! But you can't persuade me that a gentleman would make his wife cry — and then laugh at her.

(The husband protests again.)

WIFE (feverishly). Oh, I can laugh, too. I can be as gay as any man about town! — that's what you call yourself, isn't it?

(The husband stands impassive.)

WIFE. And I suppose you have been as fascinating as usual this evening? How many hearts have you insnared to-night?

(The husband is reduced to apathy.)

WIFE. Answer me one question. How many women were there at this stag party?

(The husband revolts at last.)

WIFE. Oh, I know what you are going to say. It was a college dinner, of course — and all the old professors were there. You would all have liked to take your wives, no doubt, but it is against the rules! That's a pity, isn't it? — for we should have found ourselves in good company at this college dinner, shouldn't we?

(The husband tries to protest.)

WIFE. At least, we could have laughed with you, drank with you, sang with you: "For he's a jolly good fellow." A college dinner is always so lively.

(The husband suggests a doubt.)

WIFE. It wasn't gay? So much the worse. If it had been you would have been in your element. At times you are so funny!

(The husband modestly deprecates this compliment.)

WIFE. At least, they say so — I never discovered it. I never heard you make a good joke.

(The husband is disconcerted.)

WIFE. Perhaps that is because you don't put yourself out to please me. You keep your wit for others.

(The husband approaches her, smiling.)

WIFE. No, sir, no! Don't try to put your arm around me! How do I know whom you have been hugging this evening?
(The husband recoils indignantly.)

WIFE. I know that I can't pretend to rival some women in your eyes. I'm not stout enough.

(The husband wonders what she means.)

WIFE. Oh, I know your perverted taste. For you to admire a woman, she must be as plump as a partridge, or as fat as a porpoise. I haven't watched you talking to Mrs. Sargent for nothing.

(The husband looks at her reproachfully.)

WIFE. And I know how devoted you were to her before she was married. Was Mr. Sargent at this college dinner?

(The husband shakes his head.)

WIFE. Why not? Wasn't he a classmate of yours? Isn't he your best friend? But I warn you that people will talk when they see you go to the same house every Saturday afternoon, week after week.

(The husband is about to explain.)

WIFE. Of course, you have an excellent excuse; you are taking lessons in whist! I suppose Mrs. Sargent is your partner, so that you can gaze into her eyes across the table; though you can only gaze into one of them at a time — for she squints.

(The husband lifts up his eyes.)

WIFE. You spend your days and nights out of the house, and I suppose I could follow your example, but I am not one to go gadding about.

(Hitherto the wife had spoken incessantly, rattling off speech after speech without a pause, but now she stops for breath. Hitherto the husband has responded rather by his looks and by his gestures than by any actual attempt to speak, though the actor must be careful not to suggest to the audience the husband is dumb. Now, at last, as the wife pauses, the husband sees his opportunity, and prepares to seize it.)

WIFE (starting afresh). Not another word! You needn't tell me that Mr. Sargent likes to see his wife dressed up as she is — like a monkey on a hand-organ!

(The husband is discouraged.)

WIFE. And who pays for all her fine clothes? That's what I'd like to know.

(The husband doesn't know, and doesn't care.)

WIFE. There's no use in saying that her father left her a fortune, because he didn't. Besides, he was only a dentist.

(The husband suggests that the subject is not interesting.)

WIFE. Yes, a dentist! You needn't deny it. I'm not like you; I know what I'm talking about. He was a dentist, and Mrs. Sargent used to make out his bills for mine. I have some of them still; and if you don't believe it, I can show them to you.

(The husband again suggests his lack of interest in the subject.)

WIFE. You don't like to hear this? You are afraid to learn the truth? It annoys you to be told that Mrs. Sargent was the daughter of a dentist? It seems to take away the aroma of romance, doesn't it?

(The husband indicates his complete indifference.)

WIFE. Oh, I beg your pardon; I didn't mean to cast a slur on the lady of your fancy. In the future I shall know better; I shall refrain from all remark; I shall hold my tongue. I am not like you; I can suffer in silence.

(The husband looks at her with wonder.)

WIFE. No matter what this Mrs. Sargent may do, I am to say nothing. She may steal you away from me, she may rob my poor children of their father, she may bring ruin and desolation and despair on a household once happy, and I am to make no complaint; I am to eat out my heart alone, and in secret!

(The husband again looks at her in wonder.)

WIFE. Isn't that enough? What more do you want me to do? Must I go to this Mrs. Sargent and throw myself at her feet, and beg her humbly to keep up her flirtation with my husband? Is that what you want?

(The husband has at last a chance to reply, but he feels it would be useless. He shrugs his shoulders and turns away.)

WIFE. That's right! Lose your temper! That's the best thing you can do when you dare not answer me!

(The husband turns back.)

WIFE. What have you to say in self-defence?

(The husband looks at her calmly.)

WIFE. Nothing! You can't even make up a likely story! I have believed them before, why shouldn't I now? You might at least pay me the compliment of lying

to me! But you have nothing at all to say — nothing, nothing!

(The husband approaches her.)

WIFE. Well, go on! Strike me!

(The husband is staggered by this.)

WIFE. Why don't you strike me?

(The husband does not know what to do.)

WIFE. What are you waiting for? You are the stronger — you are the man — I am only a weak woman. Don't be frightened — I shall not try to defend myself!

(The husband has again a chance to speak, but what could he say? Obviously, the best thing he can do is to go. So he starts toward the door on the right.)

WIFE. So you don't intend to beat me? Are you afraid I shall call for help?

(The husband turns back.)

WIFE. You are wrong to fear that. I am not one of the women who like to make a noise and a scandal.

(The husband is about to answer, but he checks himself.)

WIFE. I hate scandal, and I love peace and quiet.

(The husband raises his eyebrows.)

WIFE (furiously). Don't you know that?

(The husband takes up his paper quietly, and sits down again before the fire.)

WIFE. Have you nothing to say for yourself? Do you persist in behaving like a brute?

(The husband begins to read.)

WIFE (drawing near to him). And you can read a newspaper when your poor wife is in tears? There are husbands who would at least try to explain their conduct. When a wife is miserable, when she is tormented by doubts and misgivings, when perhaps she is in the wrong, but when surely she is suffering cruelly, there are husbands who would try to soothe her by a kind word, by a gentle glance. Is it so very hard to have pity on those we love?

(The husband, touched by this, lays aside his newspaper.)

WIFE. After all, what is it I ask? Only that you will tell me where you went after this college dinner — if there really was a college dinner.

(The husband is about to affirm.)

WIFE. Well, well, I will allow that there was a college dinner! But you must admit that it isn't natural for a man to come home after midnight —

(The husband is about to speak.)

WIFE. Well, well, call it twelve o'clock, half-past eleven, what you will. But the dinner was over by half-past nine —

(The husband is again about to speak.)

WIFE. You told me so yourself.

(The husband protests.)

WIFE. Is it any wonder that I am surprised? that I am worried? that I am wounded?

(The husband hesitates.)

WIFE. And you refuse to answer a single question?

(She falls, sobbing, on the sofa. The husband looks at her compassionately.)

WIFE (sobbing). Oh, mother, mother! How you would suffer if you only knew how miserable I am!

(The husband is sorrowful.)

WIFE (sitting up). And this is nothing to what I may expect in the future! This is only the beginning!

(The husband goes toward her.)

WIFE (thrusting him aside). Let me alone! I have no need of your hypocritical consolation. You wanted to see me cry. Well, I've been crying — and I hope you are satisfied!

(The husband thinks this is a little too much. He loses patience completely, and in his anger strides to and fro.)

WIFE. Oh, I know it is absurd for me to take on so. I have no business to weep. I ought to be used to neglect by this time. I suppose that we poor women can get accustomed to anything.

(The husband continues to pace to and fro.)

WIFE. When we were married, only five years ago, I little thought it would come to this. Ours was a beautiful wedding, and everybody said we were going to be so happy! Everybody except old Aunt Anastasia — she was more keen-sighted than the rest.

(The husband, who is near the fireplace, turns at this last speech.)

WIFE. Yes, sir, Aunt Anastasia was keen-sighted, for all she was eighty-seven. She said, "Virginia, my dear child, be on your guard. You are marrying a middle-aged man" —

(The husband is indignant.)

WIFE. Aunt Anastasia called you a middle-aged man! And she said that you were a broker, and that you had lived

in clubs, and that you went to the races, and that you probably played poker.

(The husband is impatient.)

WIFE. And that it was very doubtful whether you would make a good husband.

(The husband is more and more impatient.)

WIFE. And so Aunt Anastasia advised me to be on my guard, and if you ill-treated me or neglected me, to get a divorce at once!

(The husband has taken up a paper-cutter from the mantelpiece, and at the word "divorce" he breaks it.)

WIFE. There, you see, you break everything! That's the way you answer me! Your temper is getting worse and worse every day. I shall live in fear of my life soon!

(The husband is about to let his indignation break out, but he controls himself. Going to the little table, he pours out a glass of water.)

WIFE. So — you are thirsty! I don't doubt it! Your college dinner must have made you very dry.

(The husband pours out a little more water, filling the glass up.)

WIFE. Cold water ought to be good for you; it ought to calm your violence.

(The husband sips his glass slowly, and in great calmness.)

WIFE (furiously). But I will beg you not to be as careless in the future as you have been in the past.

(The husband sets down the glass and wipes his lips.)

WIFE (after a pause). The night before last you spilt half a glass of ice-water on my velvet prayer-book.

(The husband listens to her coldly but politely, and then goes to the little table and sets down the glass.)

WIFE (very angry). And there never was a time when I needed my prayer-book more than now. What would become of me if I had only this world to think of?

(The husband still listens frigidly.)

WIFE. Oh, I know what your views are! You always go to sleep during the sermon! But you cannot make me forget the lessons I learned at my mother's knee.

(The husband, resigned to anything, listens in silence.)

WIFE. What do you say?

(The husband, by a gesture, suggests that there is no need for him to say anything.)

WIFE. My mother was a noble woman!

(The husband shrugs his shoulders.)

WIFE. You don't think so? I didn't believe you capable of insulting my mother!

(The husband raises his hands in a silent appeal to Heaven.)

WIFE (sobbing). You insult my poor, dear mother. And what day do you choose for this outrage? A day when all my family used to try to make me happy — my birthday!

(The husband listens stolidly.)

WIFE. Oh, yes, to-day is December 20th — my birthday. But you had forgotten it.

(The husband protests.)

WIFE. Confess now that you didn't remember it — that you never remember it!

(The husband is about to speak.)

WIFE. Oh, don't say a word! You would only tell me another story!

(The husband looks at the audience, as though to call them to witness. Then he turns to the wife, smiling.)

WIFE. Well, what is it? What is the matter with you? Why don't you speak?

(The husband takes a jewel-case from his pocket, and opens it.)

WIFE. What's that?

(The husband hands it to her.)

WIFE. A bracelet! For me?

(The husband nods.)

WIFE (reading the inscription inside the bracelet). "Virginia — from Paul — December 20th." And this is why you were late?

(The husband nods again.)

WIFE (effusively). Oh, Paul, how good you are to me! And how I do love you! (Throwing herself into his arms.)

CURTAIN.

Brander Matthews.

KATIE'S CHOICE.

ME pockets are impty, ye knows, Kate —
 Me prospiects I wad not disguise;
 Sure 'tis not your Patrick 'd decave yees —
 Deception I always dispise.
 Nor own I a shmall patch o' ground, Kate —
 I've naught wad meesilf recomment;
 But I've hilth, and a sthrong will to wurk, Kate —
 Jist give me yersilf to defend.

I've nothing to offer yees now, Kate,
 But a heart that is tinder and throe.
 I can't dress ye up in foine silks, dear,
 Or make a grand lady ov you.
 Our lot won't be aisy at first, Kate —
 We'll struggle along fur a while;
 But, wid work and clear grit both combined, Kate,
 I'm sure before long to "strike ile."

'Tis throe that I moight wait a year, Kate,
 And build a shmall cabin so foine;
 But wid yees I'd wurk so much harder —
 Thin why should we waste any time?
 And what is distrissin' me most, Kate,
 Tim Daly's bin castin' sheep's eyes;
 He'd stale one so timptin' and swate, Kate —
 No whonder he covits the prize.

Och! sure, an' is that all your reason
 For tazin me so to unite?
 Ye'd give one no chance to refuse yees,
 While Tim is so grand and perlite.
 An' thin he has riches, has Tim dear —
 In satins each day I'd be dressed;
 But *yours* is the heart I will trust to —
 To fortune I lave all the rest.

M. C. W.

THE DUTCHMAN AND THE YANKEE.

SEVERAL years ago there dwelt — and for aught I know there still dwells — an old Dutchman on the line of the Erie canal; very illiterate, but very fond of money; and, by some chance or other, pretty well supplied with it. It was rumored, however, that he was not over-scrupulous at times, how he made it; and the following incident goes to substantiate the charge: —

There came to his house, one day, an awkward-looking individual, betraying in every turn and gesture that he hailed whence wooden nutmegs and other Yankee commodities are brought into market.

"How do, squire?" was Jonathan's salutation, squirting a gill of tobacco juice inside the door, by way of a more definite announcement that he was "round."

"Valk in, mine frient," said the Dutchman.

In stalked Jonathan, peeping on all sides, and finally settled his six feet — be the same more or less — of flesh and bones in a chair by the chimney corner.

"Squire," said he, after a pause, producing a jack-knife, and chipping off a piece from the boot-jack that lay behind him, "I've a notion, somehow or t'other, to be arter gwine to the Far West; but, darn my pieter, if it ain't a long way thar, and I kinder guess I'm on the wrong track." And he went on whittling, eying the Dutchman occasionally from beneath the half-disjointed front-piece to his plush cap.

"You goesch vest, eh?" exclaimed Mynheer: "vell, you ish on the right roat, my frient; but have you got a lichen-
se to go vest?"

"License!" cried Jonathan, suspending his whittling; "I ain't got the first one, and what's more, cap'n, I ain't never heern of the cussed thing afore, nuther."

"Vell, vell," said the Dutchman, "that von't do at all. You musht have a lichen-
se to go vest, for because they von't let you shettle out there without vone."

"How you talk!" was the Yankee's ejaculation, deeply concerned at this piece of intelligence.

"Dat is the truth, mine vrient," pursued the Dutch-

man; "but I have lichesens to shell — don't you vant to puy von?"

"Can't dodge it no way, can I?" exclaimed the raw one. "How much'll the tarnal critter come to?" he asked, producing a weasel skin in an alarming state of depletion.

"Only two tollars, dat'sh all, mine vrient," said the operator, rubbing his hands, and rising to receive the fee.

"Wall, I suppose I've got to deu it, anyhow, cap'n," remarked Jonathan, "shelling out the pewter," piece by piece, until he had counted out into the Dutchman's greedy palm two "halves" and four "quarters," leaving a balance in the weasel of three "York shillings," a "dime," and two "reds."

"Down with the document, squire," he cried, shoving the skin in his breeches-pocket, and rising.

"Vell, mine good veller," said Dutchy, "I ain't got my spectacles, and you writes, don't you?"

"Jest like a schoolmarm, old chap," replied Jonathan.

"Vell, den, you writes von," said Mynheer, "for yourself, putting down your name, for to go vest and shettle there, and I'll shign it. Come up to de table, misther, and I shall give you de pen and paper."

The writing materials were produced; Jonathan threw his plush cap on the floor, seized the old gray goose quill in the ink-horn, tried its point on his thumb-nail, and, crouching his head until his right ear almost touched the paper, he drew his tongue out its whole length, and wrote. When he had closed the scroll, he threw himself back in his chair to scan the production, and see if it was all right.

"That's the talk," he cried at length. "Thes are presents is to inform all it may concern as how Jeddydiar Doosenberry is hereby and herein entitled to go to the Far West, be the same more or less, and squat thereupon, for having paid me in hand the sum of tew dollars, lawful currency, as license for so gwine West and squatting thar."

"Dat's it!" exclaimed the Dutchman.

"Wall, squire," cried the Yankee, "put your fist thar."

The license man did as he requested, and signed his name to the writing.

"Jeddydiar," as he called himself, took the paper,

folded it very carefully, as boys fold up a puzzle, and deposited it in his vest pocket among an assortment of old "chaws" of tobacco, gun-flints, matches, and other articles too numerous to mention. Then, rising, he exclaimed, —

"Squire, I'm much obleeged to ye for this ere piece of counsel. It takes a feller nine lives to keep track of the new kinks that turns up in the law. Good-by to ye."

"Goot-by, goot-by," cried the Dutchman, and the victim went off whistling "Yankee Doodle."

A week had elapsed after the transaction we have just chronicled, and our Dutch acquaintance had about forgotten it, when a merchant of the village called upon him, saying, —

"Mr. S., if it is convenient, I should like the amount of the order which you sent me the other day, and which I paid a man by the name of Doosenberry."

"An orter!" cried the Dutchman, utterly upset by the demand. "I never gives an order to nopody."

"But here it is," continued the merchant, producing an order duly signed, requesting him to pay "Jeddydiar Doosenberry" twenty-five dollars in goods.

Dutchy saw at a glance he was sold, paid up like a man, and has never operated in licenses since.

Anon.

A "DUNNO" MAN.

A PASSUL uv us was settin' in Parker's sto', over whar the Caney Creek road crosses the bayou, an' the boys 'lowed that it was goin' ter be a putty dull Chrismus, fur we didn't see nothin' comin' our way. Wall, we sot thar chawin' our terbacker an' lendin' out lies at a small rate uv intrust, when the wust-lookin' tramp I ever seed come a-limpin' in. He nodded at fust one an' then tuther, an' then sot down without sayin' a word.

"Podner," said Parker, as he retched over an' sorter poked the fire, "which way?"

"Dunno," the tramp replied.

"Which way did you come frum?"

"Dunno."

"You ain't right bright, air you, podner?"

"Dunno."

"What do you know?"

"Dunno."

"Wall, now here," said Parker, hittin' a stick uv burnin' wood so hard that it spit a shower uv sparks, "we don't hanker airter these dunno sort uv folks. Ever' time one comes through the neighborhood, suthin' turns up missin'; so ef it's jest the same to you, w'y we'd like to see the last uv you putty quick."

"Yas," Mose Simmons jined in, sorter wollop'in' his terbacker round frum fust one jaw to the other, "it's a bad idee to have sich dunno chaps round, 'specially in the Chrismus times; so don't you think it's time you was pullin' out?"

"Dunno."

Parker he then got up an' tuck him by the ear, an' shoved him out. Then we all sot down ter wollop'in' our terbacker ergin — we was most too lazy to chaw outright — an' putty soon who should come sauterin' in but Joe Piper. The boys all groaned, fur Joe is a chronic beggar, and the laziest man in the world, I reckon. It was his habit to go about the neighborhood, Chrismus times, an' beg fur g'int's uv meat an' meal an' sich, fur he gest wouldn't work.

"What are you on the skirmish fur now, Joe, meat or meal?" Parker axed.

"Nuther one," he replied.

Then we boys laughed till the terbacker juice run outer our mouths. "No, fellers," said he, "I have got a little meat an' meal, but I tell you whut I wush you'd do: wush you'd sorter fling in an' raise me a few dollars; my chillun is about naked, an' my little gal ain't got no shoes. It ain't laziness on my part this time, fellers, fur you know that I ain't been able to work sense that saw-log fell on me. I'm afeerd the little gal will have pneumony, for we kaint keep her in the house. Say, Parker, I've done good deal uv tradin' with you in my time, so now set the ball to rollin' by lettin' me have a few things."

We had to laugh. "Here," said Patsey Buek; "we'll make you the finest present you ever seed," an' then he tuck up a ole woolen shirt that the tramp had left. It was rolled up in a sort uv bundle, an' was the wust-lookin' piece of goods I ever seed. Joe he got mad.

"Oh," said Parker, "you've got to take it."

"Dinged ef I do," Joe replied. "I ain't round pickin' up ole shirts."

"Wull, we'll see you pick up this one," said Parker.

"Take it, or we'll bang you agin that black ook," retorted Buck.

"Fellers, I didn't think you'd treat me thiser way," said Joe.

"But you think so now," replied Parker. "We air not only goin' to make you take it, but we're goin' to make you put it on. Buck, git that rope thar, an' we'll tie him."

He seed that they was in earnest, an' to keep down trouble Joe he tuck holt uv the shirt.

"Unroll it," said Buck.

He hesitated a minit, an' then unrolled it on the counter. Then he uttered a cry, an' snatched a roll uv bills. The boys gathered round him, but he whipped out an old pistol an' told 'em to stand back, an' they stood. He smiled, stepped to one side, an' counted ten \$20 bills.

"Here," cried Parker, "this money belongs to that crazy tramp. Let's hunt him. Come on, all hands."

We went out, an' hadn't gone fur till we found him layin' side the road.

Parker lifted him up an' says, —

"Didn't you leave some money back yonder?"

The feller he looked at Parker and said, —

"Dunno," then he dropped back dead.

Opie Read.

A PLEA FOR THE DRUMMER.

WARMLY press his jewelled flipper,

Ask him how he fares to-day ;

Speak to him in accents chipper,

List' to all he has to say :

Greet the envoy from the centres,

From the marts of every land —

Lo, behold the drummer enters

With his sample-case in hand !

For you will not see him ever.
Some day he'll be laid away,
With his little yarn together,
Hidden far from light of day.
Then remorse your peace will scatter,
If you e'er did give him pain,
And you'll miss his merry chatter
When the robins nest again.

Harken, then, oh, merchant Crœsus,
To his merry little tale;
Think of home-joys that he misses
In his life upon the rail;
Think what you would do without him
And his grip and sample case —
What a charm there is about him,
From his toes to smiling face.

He it is that ever brings in
All the latest and the best,
Makes you buy the very things in
Which you know you'd ne'er invest;
Calls you "Tom" or "Dick" or "Jimmy,"
Tells you all the latest news;
If you're not in first-rate trim, he
Quickly drives away the blues.

Greet him, then, with welcome cheery,
And when he his race has run,
When at last of life he's weary,
And his last yarn he has spun,
Plant him 'neath the weeping willow —
Sign of all that's sad and meek,
With a grip-sack for a pillow,
And a rock upon his cheek.

Emile Pickhardt.

“VAS MARRIAGE A FAILURE?”

Vas marriage a failure? Vell, now, dot depends
 Altogeddher on how you look at id, mine friends.
 Like dhose double-horse teams dot you see at der races,
 Id depends pooty mooch on der pair in der traces;
 Eef dhey don'd pool togeddher righdt off at der shtart,
 Ten dimes oudt of nine dhey vas beddher apart.

Vas marriage a failure? Der vote vas in doubt;
 Dhose dot's oudt vould be in, dhose dot's in vould be oudt;
 Der man mit oxberience, goot looks, und dash,
 Gets a vife mit some fife hundord dousand in cash;
 Budt, after der honeymoon, vhere vas der honey?
She haf der oxberience — he haf der money.

Vas marriage a failure? Eef dot vas der case,
 Vot vas to pecome off der whole human race?
 Vot you dink dot der oldt “Pilgrim Faders” vould say,
 Dot came in der *Sunflower* to oldt Plymouth Bay,
 To see der fine coundtry dis peoples haf got,
 Und dhen hear dhem ask sooch conondhrums as dot?

Vas marriage a failure? Shust go, ere you tell,
 To dot Bunker Mon Hillument, vhere Varren fell;
 Dink off Vashington, Franklin, und “Honest Old Abe” —
 Dhey vas all been aroundt since dot first Plymouth babe.
 I vas only a Deutscher, but I dells you vot!
 I pelief, every dime, in sooch “failures” as dot.

Vas marriage a failure? I ask mine Katrine,
 Und she look off me so dot I feels pooty mean.
 Dhen she say: “Meester Strauss, shust come here, eef you
 please.”
 Und she dake me vhere Yawcob und leedle Loweeze
 By dheir shnug trundle-bed vas shust saying dheir prayer,
 Und she say, mit a smile, “Vhas dhere some failures
 dhere?”

Charles Follen Adams.

"DUN GONE DEAD."**A STORY FROM THE CATAWBA COUNTRY.**

ON the Catawba River, in the mountains west of Salisbury, North Carolina, I came to a hamlet of seven or eight houses one mid-forenoon. Two or three mules were hitched in front of the store, but the only person in sight was a girl of eleven or twelve, seated on the doorsteps, with elbows on her knees, and her chin in her hands.

"Good-morning!" I saluted, as I came quite near.

"Mawnin'," she replied, without raising her head.

"Anything wrong?"

She pointed towards the house, and choked back a sob.

"Somebody sick?"

"Dad's orful. He'll be gittin' to gwine befo' night."

At that moment a woman appeared at the door of the house mentioned, and beckoned me over. She had been weeping, but she choked back her tears, and said, —

"I am glad you 'un has cum. The ole man are gwine to leave us. Cum right in."

The country doctor had come and gone, and seven or eight people had gathered in the one big room to be with the dying to the last. On a bed in the corner lay an old man. He had the frame of a giant, and had stood up under old age like an oak-tree. He was a specimen mountaineer, born and reared among those mighty hills, and without education or polish. He had lived out his days without knowing the world around him. He was propped up in bed, with a chair and a pillow behind him, and as he shook hands with me, he said, —

"I'm glad, stranger — mighty glad. I reckoned the folkses down below might hang on to yer till too late."

"He'll read the Bible to yer, Jim," said the blacksmith, with evident relief.

"After a bit, Jim. I want to talk a leetle fust. And say, Jim, if ye hev got a mewl to be shod, or any other work to do, go an' do it. It's mighty good of ye to cum in, but ye can't help me any."

Jim went, and the other man went, but the women remained. There were four of them. Three had their

knitting, and one was making a hickory shirt. The wife was busy most of the time at the other end of the room, and after a bit the girl, whose name was Nancy, came in and sat down on the floor beside my chair. The old man was given a brandy sling, propped up anew, and then he said to me, —

“They say I’m dyin’, and I reckon they ’uns is right. I feel womanish, and that shows me I’m dun sent fur. Theyum’ yere hev bin tellin’ me to get ready.”

“Yes, it would be well,” I replied.

“I’ve hearn about this yere heaven an’ t’ other place,” he went on, “and I reckon I orter hev paid mo’t ’tenshun to what folks said. It’s purty late now to begin, but I’d like to ax a few qeshuns. It’s all straight ’bout that ar heaven, hain’t it?”

“I believe it is.”

“It’s writ down in the Bible that all we ’uns orter to be good, hain’t it?”

“Yes.”

“And all of we ’uns is dun told that if we is bad we’ll go to that t’other place?”

“Yes.”

“Wall, I’ve hearn it often ’nuff, but I never gin any heed. It was so much easier to be honery that I kinder drifted that way. I kinder depended on my livin’ to be a hundred years old, you know, and yere I’m tooken away at eighty-one. It’s kinder sudden — like meetin’ a b’ar as you turn a corner, and hain’t got no gun.”

“I don’t think you have been so very wicked,” I said, as his bony fingers worked nervously on the quilt.

“Wall, mebbe not — mebbe not. I hain’t never shot anybody, nor been a robber, nor sot fire to a meetin’ house, like some. Does the Lord call it a sin to get the best of a feller in a mewl trade?”

“Probably not.”

“I traded a dog for a gun onct, and that dog he ’un died in two days. I see now that I orter returned that gun, but in them days I was stiff-necked. Hev I got to answer for that?”

“Perhaps.”

“I took up a stray hog onct, and didn’t say a word about it, and afterwards killed him fur bacon. It was oney, as I kin see now, and the Lord’s gwine to bring it up ag’in me. What shall I say, stranger?”

"I can't tell you."

"I fit with Tom Wheeler onct. I begun the quarrel, and I was to blame. I'm a-thinkin' the Lord has got that down. And, say, I haven't allus done right by the ole woman."

"Jim, oh! Jim! don't serious nuthing 'bout me!" said the woman, as she came to the bed with a tin plate in one hand and a wiping towel in the other.

"But, mammy, I've been shuckless and onery. We could hev had mo' if I'd worked and tooken keer of things. I kin see whar I've dun wrong. The Lord's got it all down ag'in me, and he's gwine to make me holler fur it. Stranger, ye kin read, I reckon?"

"Yes."

"Then read me a leetle outen the Bible. Lucy, git it fur him. We hain't none of us much on the read. Don't remember that I ever looked into it, but I never used the leaves for gun-wadding, like some. I've hearn the circuit rider read off about Dan'l in the lion's den, Moses and the sarpint, the children of Israel, and sich, but I never cuddled to it much. Thought it might hev bin writ by a city chap, who wanted to show off his smartness. D'ye think it was all true?"

"Every word of it."

"Then the Lord is gwine ter jedge me fur it. Read to me, stranger."

I took the Holy Book, and read to him the seventeenth chapter of Luke, and such passages from other chapters as I thought might comfort him. The women gathered about, crying very softly, and when I closed the book the old man opened his eyes, and said, —

"That's sorter soothing, and yit it makes me see jist how onery I hev bin. I'm gwine ter hev a scrapin' time with the Lord up thar, stranger. He 'un will have a heap o' things laid up ag'in me that I've dun gone forgotten long ago, an' when I cum for'd to be jedged H'un will say to me, —

"Look yere, ole Jim, what did ye do this and that fur? Didn't I command ye, and didn't ye walk off by yer own trail and do as ye liked?"

"That how He'un will say, stranger, and ole Jim will stand thar with his head down and feel guilty all over."

"You have done many good deeds in your life, no doubt," I said.

"Jist — a — few — not — nuff — to — count fur shucks. You hain't a preacher or deacon, are ye?"

"No."

"Mebbe ye don't even purfess?"

"I am sorry to say I am not a church member."

"But I want ye to pray with me, jist the same. I reckon ye hain't so onery that the Lord won't listen, and your voice kinder comforts me."

After prayer he was quiet for a long time. Two or three people came in and grouped around the bed, but he did not hear them. By and by he opened his eyes, reached out for my hand, and said, —

"Stranger, I've been thinking it all over. I know I hain't fitten, and I'm not gwine to deny that I'm onery, but I'm goin' up to the Lord and say, —

"Oh, Lord! ole Jim cums yere to own up to all ye've got set down ag'in him; but jist remember that he can't read nor write, and that he's lived wuss nor a b'ar all his days. He hain't had no mo' chance than a mewl, and he's been wicked through his ignorance. Gin him a leetle show fur hisself, and see if he don't cum out on top."

"That's what I'm gwine to say, stranger, and mebbe He'un will 'low that I'm wuth savin'."

It was long after noon now, and as the old man seemed to fall into a sleep, I went out for a short walk. As I returned to the gate his wife met me, wiping her eyes on her apron, and said, —

"Stranger, the ole man's dun gone dead!"

And so he was.

M. Quad.

SELF-DEPENDENCE.

WEARY of myself, and sick of asking

What I am, and what I ought to be,

At this vessel's prow I stand, which bears me

Forward, forward, o'er the starlit sea.

And a look of passionate desire

O'er the sea and to the stars I send:

"Ye who from my childhood up have calmed me,

Calm me, ah, compose me to the end!

“ Ah, once more,” I cried, “ ye stars, ye waters,
 On my heart your mighty charm renew ;
 Still, still let me, as I gaze upon you,
 Feel my soul becoming vast like you ! ”

From the intense, clear, star-sown vault of heaven,
 Over the lit sea's unquiet way,
 In the rustling night air came the answer :
 “ Wouldst thou *be* as these are ? *Live* as they.

“ Unaffrighted by the silence round them,
 Undistracted by the sights they see,
 These demand not that the things without them
 Yield them love, amusement, sympathy.

“ And with joy the stars perform their shining,
 And the sea its long, moon-silvered roll ;
 For self-poised they live, nor pine with noting
 All the fever of some differing soul.

“ Bounded by themselves, and unregardful
 In what state God's other works may be,
 In their own tasks all their powers pouring,
 These attain the mighty life you see.”

O air-born voice ! long since, severely clear,
 A cry like thine in mine own heart I hear :
 “ Resolve to be thyself ; and know that he
 Who finds himself loses his misery ! ”

Matthew Arnold.

A PROCLAMATION.

WITH the advice and consent of the National League, I hereby appoint Thursday, the fourth day of April, as a day of feasting, recreation, and fun ; and I invite the people of this Commonwealth to abandon upon that day their customary avocations, and, so far as may be agreeable, to attend the morning services of such churches as may be open, then and there to inform themselves upon the political situation and the present aspect of the temperance and Indian questions.

Let the dinner hour be devoted to a more faithful and discriminating attention to its important duties than is practicable upon days of business.

Let the afternoon be given to the encouragement of such entertainments as are calculated to promote the physical culture of the race, not forgetting the time-honored occasion of the opening of the national game; and, as the shadows of evening fall upon our beloved homes, let us seek the brighter precincts of the theatre, and in the garish glow of its rising or setting stars lend our aid toward the elevation of the stage.

Forsaking the unbridled asceticism of the Fathers, let us devote the day to a consistent conviviality and a rigorous self-indulgence. Wisely forgetting the irretrievable past, and prudently ignoring the inevitable future, let us hilariously entertain the evanescent present, and, laying aside every weight of care and of responsibility, consecrate the time thus set apart to individual enjoyment and to personal gratification.

Given at the pool room, by my excellency the umpire, this first day of April, in the Year of Independence 113, and of the organization of the Boston Base Ball Association the nineteenth.

Heaven Save the Pennant!

"CAUGHT ON THE JURY."

THERE once lived a man — and I'll call not his name —
 Who lived in the country, with Polly, his dame;
 He was fond of indulging too freely at times,
 And if ever he tasted, away went the dimes.
 For several days he would frolic and spree,
 Away at the tavern, "*a-takin' o' tea*;"
 But Polly at home was uneasy the while,
 Though she knew that the town was not more than a mile;
 She knew that if ever he tasted a "*drap*,"
 He soon would be fixed off for taking a nap,
 Then he'd trade 'round and "*swop*," and always get "*bit*,"
 Though he never could "*man-up*" the courage to quit.

A week nearly spent, then homeward he'd start,
With his eyes looking red, and a pain at his heart;
But when Polly would meet him, he'd say, with a cough,
" *I was caught on the Jury, and I couldn't get off.*"

But autumn came 'round, and he gathered his corn
All up in a heap, and he wanted a "*horn*,"
And a little wouldn't do, for the neighbors around
Would shuck "*nary ear*" unless they were *found*.
Their fathers declared that to drink it was right
On occasions like that, of a corn-shucking night;
" It cooled them in summer, it warmed them when cold,
'Twas good for the children, 'twould strengthen the old."

The old man had swigged it since first he was wed,
And had spent nearly all but the old negro, Ned:
A faithful old servant he always had been —
Though sometimes, like "*massy*," was tempted to sin.

He told Uncle Ned to saddle up "*Tug*,"
The old sorrel mule, and take the big jug,
And go to that tavern where oft he had been,
And bring home a gallon of No. 1 gin;
" And if you can find it, now just understand,
You must bring home a gallon of Tennessee brand."

But Ned was afflicted with *massy's* disease,
And, thought he, " I'll drink now as much as I please:
I'll see if it's good, and its flavor I'll test,
To prove I'm not cheated in buying the best."
But Neddy kept tasting and guzzling down,
Till "*de wurl an' de trees war all a-turnin' aroun'.*"
Then he thought to himself that 'twas time to be cool,
So he let go all holds, and dropped off of his mule.
He quickly looked 'round him, in search of a place
To hide, for the turnpike had dirtied his face;
Behind some thick bushes he endeavored to creep,
To take a short nap before going to sleep.

The night had set in, and 'twas cloudy and dark,
And to strike up a fire he hadn't a spark;
So he rested in silence — he knew not the way
To go through the woods till the light of the day.
Then he picked up his jug, and he found 'twas too light,
And he swore, " Now, by jingo, there sumfin not right!"

His mule had absconded, and had left him alone
 But the worst of it all was — his liquor was gone.
 He felt then so scared up for what he had done,
 That “*footbuck*” he started, and homeward he run;
 And when he arrived there his breakfast was o’er,
 So he slipped around slyly to find the back door;
 And he thought to himself he’d enjoy the fun
 Of telling a “*yarn*,” as old “*massy*” had done.

His master then entered the kitchen, and cried,
 “Just look-a-here, Ned, I am good for your hide!
 You black rascal, tell me now where you have been
 Since I sent you to town for that gallon of gin?”

“Jist hole on a minit!” now cried Uncle Ned —
 As he stood there thinking and scratching his head —
 “De fac is, ole massy, I tell you de troof,
 If I dy de nex’ minit here under dis roof.
 To buy you some *sperits* I went to de town,
 And when I got dar I war a-steppin’ aroun’,
 And de fus’ thing I node I war up in de loff,
Dun kotch on de Jury, an’ I couldn’t git off.”

Vera.

REMARKS OF SIR PORTLY SNOOT.

“BESHREW my heart! — to speak in ancient lingo —
 But things go queerly in this world of ours.
 I swear ’tis queer — ’tis strange — ’tis queer, by jingo,
 By every wagging tail so curled of ours!

“Behold me, fat Sir Snout, behold, I say,
 This bursting front, this avalanche of clay,
 That sits, like the bay window of a judge,
 Beneath my beating heart that scarce can budge;
 These cheeks, that wag in fatness to and fro;
 These stumpy legs, that now refuse to go,
 Because they were not hired to bear a ton!
 By my distended ribs! I say, tis fun!
 By my umbrella ears! my half-hid eyes!
 I say, ’tis fun — with many groans and sighs.

“To think — ha, ha! — that but two moons ago
I was a pauper, vagrant, thief; as low
As ever scoured the garbage-fields for food,
With ever-hungry maw and savage mood,
And brother vagrants trotting by my side —
I say it now with pardonable pride;
For Fortune has at last my sky o'er-smiled,
And lifted up her long-neglected child.

“My sweetheart, too, has fared no worse than I —
Behold her snoring in the neighboring sty.
Ah me, how many days we roamed together,
And braved the clubs, the dogs, the wind and weather,
The jealousies of swinish enemies!

Often we limped toward home with bleeding ears,
While others crowed upon their victories —

We suffered and we loved in smiles and tears.
Those were the days that ne'er shall come again,
Of Arab life and youth and liberty.

Tears! — even now they trickle down my *pen* —
I could not write my feelings did I try.

“But Fortune smiled one day, I said before —

Remorse o'ertook my master for his deeds;

He led me from the barren, desert shore,

And pondered thoughtfully upon my needs;

It was a change from husks to bread and cheese;

From want and misery and cold unto

A gilded lodging full of bloated ease,

In which my lordship round and portly grew.

“Behold the queerness of this world of ours! —

Now corn and other dainties come in showers;

I eat until I faint, and more is here!

Once I was left to starve, and now — how queer!

I find me wallowing in a land — a land

Where milk and honey seem as common sand.

I do believe if I should wink for port,

The slaves would bring a barrel with a snort.

I am a prince, a very prince of cheer —

Even the chickens and their chanticleer

Now curb their pride, and beg for favors here.

And many a crumb falls from my table now
For such as eat them thankfully, I trow.
'Tis true my freedom's somewhat like restrained —
Sweetheart and I have long apart remained —
Another pang of conscience in my master
May remedy, however, this disaster.

“ At night I lay me down to pleasant dreams,
And then the world a fairy-palace seems ;
The lantern-eyed, four-legged nightingale
Sits warbling sweetly in the moonlight pale,
And unto me and my fat, lovely maid,
Grinds out a most melodious serenade ;
Then all her fellow-birds, entrancing choir !
Join in a symphony that rises higher
And higher till the sleepers groan in — France ? —
And all ends in a bacchanalian dance.

“ The morrow dawns, and lo ! my master bold,
With many calculating glances cold,
Leans o'er the fence to see my morning meal,
Till creeping up my back the chills I feel —
I know not why — I cannot understand
His looks and language, all so underhand —
As when he says, ‘ Thanksgiving day, Sir Snout,
Should find thee a Leviathan about !
I do believe already he outweighs
My last year's heaviest. Old Bumble says
He'll do the job much cheaper than young Speck ;
Bumble shall have it, though it break his neck ! ’

“ Ah, me ! what is ‘ Thanksgiving ’ in hog-lore ? —
But down, base, guilty fears ! arise no more !
How many things we cannot comprehend —
And should they trouble us ? Nay, heaven defend !
I'll rest me so upon this downy couch,
And smile at fate, and never cry an ‘ ouch ’ !
Until I feel myself unwell or sick,
Or feel the smarting of the driver's stick.

“ What if I do behold the people bustle
Around, and sharpen up their knives, and hustle

Long coffin-troughs and barrels into place?
 It is their business, says my smiling face.
 'Tis true I sometimes think now of the words
 I heard in childhood once, and o'er them cried :
 How men would cut our throats with ugly swords !
 But that was silly stuff — I know they lied.
 'Tis true that life is short among us all ;
 In all our tribes there are no patriarchs.
 But, heigho ! what is that ? Whate'er befall,
 We are as well off as the crows or larks.

“ What if I do occasionally wake
 From mid-day nap, and, all perspiring, quake
 With fear, to hear the piercing cries of woe
 That come from brother throats, whom well I know ?
 The gluttons have perhaps o'er-eat themselves,
 Or in their quarrels over-heat themselves,
 Or at some knavish game but beat themselves ;
 Now let them squeal and learn their wholesome fill
 From a well-regulated pig that never gets ill.
 I am Sir Snout, the prince of goodly cheer,
 I eat and drink and think — the world is queer ! ”

William Mill Butler.

HOW THE DUTCHMAN KILLED THE WOOD-CHUCK.

VELL, den, I dells you mit te dime I goed a-huntin' mit mine brodder Shake, ven ve vash boys not so biggerish ash ve ish now. Shake he vash smaller ash I pin, unt I vash bigger ash Shake. Ve vash dwyn boys, but dere vash about two or dree years bigger ash vun anudder vash. Vell, den, von day I dakes brodder Shake unt two udder togs, unt I dells dem we go a-huntin' mit te woodchuck unt some oder dings. Ve go to te old barn past, unt te pack of te field behint us, unt pooty soon we kit te voots in te mittle of us, ten I vistles to Shake unt te udder two togs, unt py unt py some-dings schart te togs, unt they roon shust so pig fasht ash dey neffer vas roon pefore. Shake he roon pooty fasht, unt I roon, for I dinks somedings vas schart mit de togs. Pooty soon te togs vash stop mit roonin, unt vash makin' dere hets

in te log mit a pig hole in, ven I comes up. Shake, he says, "Prodder Hans, ter ish a woodchuck in te log mit te hole." Den I tells Shake, "You shust vatch mit vun hole, unt te togs te udder hole, den I vill make vun udder hole, mit mine ax, in te mittle of te log, unt den, ven I see him, I vill shlock him un te koop, unt schmite his het off mit te ax." So Shake, he says, "I vill stop te hole mit mine foot, so he vill not mooch kit out mit dis hole." Den I dakes mine ax, unt a hole make in te log. Pooty soon I kits a hole, unt I dinks I see te woodchuck, unt I dells prodder Shake to still be, unt I shopped a little more. unt den I sees te dings het, so I makes de ax come down mit all my might — I dinks I vill make his het off — unt, mine gracious! vat you dink! Prodder Shake, he make von pig noise, unt he gommence a groanin', schwearin in Tutch unt English all togedder, unt he says, "Prodder Hans, dash is not te woodchuck; you ish von biggest fool, you hash schmite mine foot off. Oh! mine gootness! I ish kill!" Vell, I vash schart mooch; I dinks I had kilt prodder Shake, unt I gried, unt schweared a leetle, den I looked in te hole, unt tere vash a bart of prodder Shake's poot, unt two or dree toes, all ploody, laying in te log, put dere vash no woodchuck or any udder dings in te log. Shake he croaned so pig lout dat I dake his foot unt dies mine shirt up mit it. Shake, he make him up on my pack, unt I garried him to te house. Py unt py his foot git well, put no more toes crowed out it, unt he say, "Prodder Hans, I vill no more go woodehuck hunt mit you;" unt he neffer did.

THE BOY WHO WENT FROM HOME.

"You ask me which is the dearest,
 And which one I love the best;
 Ah, neighbor, the treasure we lose
 We value more than the rest!
 Five children are round our hearthstone;
 You'd think I should make no moan;
 But my heart goes out with yearning
 To the boy who went from home.

“Come in and sit a while with me,
My neighbor so kind and true;
It surely cannot be a harm
To talk to a friend like you
About this wayward boy of mine,
Gone from us these fifteen years;
And how the thought of him has kept
My pillow wet with tears.

“You never saw him, neighbor mine?
Ah, a handsome lad was he!
In face he was like his father,
His temper he took from me.
We both were over-fond of him,
And maybe it was too true
That we spoiled him just a little,
As fond parents often do.

“But he had such a smiling way,
And a blue and sunny eye,
And my heart was like a heart of wax
Whenever my boy was by.
And no matter what he wished for,
Nor where he wanted to go;
Try as hard as ever I would,
I never could say him no.

“He grew a bit wild and thoughtless,
And wouldn't settle down:
He laughed at his mother's chidings,
Nor heeded his father's frown.
At last his father grew angry,
And they had a word or two;
Ah, neighbor, how for a lifetime
A word or two we may rue!

“And so one day he left us —
Ah, my darling, handsome lad,
I never could say, good neighbor,
That ever he did aught bad.

He was very quick, but noble;
And wayward, but loving, too;
The fault was mostly on our side, —
I say this 'twixt me and you.

“ I'm glad I've said this much to you,
For, neighbor, you cannot know
What 'tis to have a sorrow like mine,
Nor say a word as you go.
I feel a little ease of heart,
Though you have said not a word, —
Just listen a minute, neighbor,
Was that a step that I heard ?

“ Perhaps I am growing childish,
For at times it comes to me
That one day my boy will come again,
The boy I long to see.
I must have been weak and faulty.
But Christ hath long forgiven,
And all my prayers for my wanderer
Are treasured up in heaven.

“ His father never looked the same,
But stooped and grew quite gray;
As for me, my grief keeps vigil
Since the day he went away.
Just fifteen years — a long, long time! —
My good neighbor, what was that?
I thought above the garden fence
I just saw a well-worn hat.

“ Stand out of my light, dear neighbor!
Oh, surely I hear a sound!
The latch of the gate seems lifted;
Can it be the lost is found?
Oh, neighbor, I'm worn and weary!
I wonder if this *could* be,
My long-lost boy come home again,
Come back to his home and me.”

*The latch of the gate was lifted,
 And gently let fall again —
 A bearded man with boyhood's eyes
 Came into the sunlight then,
 And he pushed aside the neighbor —
 How strange she felt no alarms! —
 And he lifted his gray old mother
 Right up in his two strong arms;
 And she sobbed upon his shoulder;
 "Ah! the heart doth know its own!
 For lo! my boy is back again —
 My boy who went from home."*

Emma M. Johnston.

PUTTING UP THE STOVE.

THE melancholy days had come, that no householder
 loves —
 Days of the taking down of blinds and putting up of
 stoves;
 The lengths of pipe forgotten lie in the shadow of the shed,
 Dinged out of symmetry they be, and all with rust are red.
 The husband gropes amid the mass that he placed there
 anon,
 And swears to find an elbow-joint, and eke a leg, are gone.

So fared it with good Mister Brown, to whom his spouse:
 "Behold,
 Unless you wish us all to go and catch our deaths of cold,
 Swift be yon stove and pipes from out their storing-place
 conveyed,
 And to black-lead and set them up, lo, I will lend my aid."
 This Mister Brown he trembling heard — I trow his heart
 was sore —
 For he was married many years, and had been there before.
 And timidly he said: "My love, perchance the better plan
 'Twere to hie to the tinsmith's shop and bid him send a
 man?"

To whom his spouse indignantly : " So you would have me,
 then,
 To waste our substance upon riotous tinsmith's journey-
 men?
 A penny saved is twopence earned, rash prodigal of
 pelf;
 Go, false one, go, and I will black and set it up myself."
 When thus she spoke, the husband knew that she had sealed
 his doom :
 " Fill high the bowl with Samian lead, and gimme down
 that broom,"
 He cried, then to the outhouse marched. Apart the doors
 he hove,
 And closed in deadly conflict with his enemy, the stove.

Round 1 — They faced each other : Brown to get an open-
 ing sparred

Adroitly. His antagonist was cautious on its guard.
 Brown led off with his left to where a length of stovepipe
 stood,
 And nearly cut his fingers off. (The stove allowed First
 Blood.)

Round 2. — Brown came up swearing, and in Græco-
 Roman style

Closed with the stove, and tugged and strove at it a weary
 while;
 At last the leg he held gave way; flat on his back fell
 Brown,
 And the stove fell on top of him, and claimed the First
 Knockdown.

The fight is done, and Brown has won; his hands are
 rasped and sore,

And perspiration and black-lead stream from his every
 pore;

Sternly triumphant, as he gives his prisoner a shove,
 He cries : " Where in the angel's name shall I put this
 blessed stove ? "

And calmly Mrs. Brown to him she indicates the spot,
 And bids him keep his temper, and remarks that he looks
 hot.

And now comes in the sweet o' the day ; the Brown holds
 in his gripe
 And strives to fit a six-inch joint upon a five-inch pipe ;
 He hammers, dinges, bends, and shakes, while his wife
 scornfully
 Tells him how *she* would manage if only she were he.

At last the joints are joined ; they rear a pyramid in air,
 A tub upon the table, and upon the tub a chair,
 And on the chair supporters are the stovepipe and the
 Brown,
 Like the lion and the unicorn, a-fightin' for the crown ;
 While Mistress Brown she cheerily says to him : " I expec'
 'Twould be just like your clumsiness to fall and break
 your neck."

Scarce were the piteous accents said before she was aware
 Of what might be called a miscellaneous music in the air,
 And in wild crash and confusion upon the floor rained
 down
 Chairs, tables, tubs, and stovepipes, anathemas, and Brown.

There was a moment's silence — Brown had fallen on the
 cat ;
 She was too thick now for a book-mark, but too thin for a
 mat.
 And he was all wounds and bruises from his head unto his
 foot,
 And seven breadths of Brussels were ruined with the soot.

" Oh, wedded love, how beautiful, how sweet a thing thou
 art !"

Up from her chair did Mistress Brown, as she saw him fall-
 ing, start,
 And shrieked aloud as a sickening fear did her inmost
 heartstrings gripe.

" Josiah Winterbotham Brown, have you gone and smashed
 that pipe ?"

Then up and stert he Mister Brown, as one that had been
 wode,
 And big his bosom swelled with wrath, and red his visage
 glowed ;

Wild rolled his eye as he made reply (and his voice was sharp and shrill) :

“I have not, madam, but, by — by — by the Nine Gods, I will!”

He swung the pipe above his head, he dashed it on the floor,

And that stove-pipe, as a stove-pipe, it did exist no more ;
Then he strode up to his shrinking wife, and his face was stern and wan,

As in a hoarse, changed voice he hissed : “Send for that tinsmith man!”

G. T. L.

LITTLE NEW YEAR.

NEAR the Spanish Peaks in Southern Colorado, some twenty-five miles from the railroad town of Pueblo, lay a little mining camp called Shanty Flats. Not a pretty name, to be sure, but descriptive of the place; for the dozen dwellings which formed the camp were nothing but shanties, save one log cabin belonging to the head man, Captain Will, as the men called him. Except a few Scotchmen, the twenty miners under his direction were Americans, men who had come to the great West seeking gold, and, not finding their hopes realized, had hired out to Captain Will, who owned a large claim in Southern Colorado, and wanted men to help work it. The little settlement was like many another of the kind, where God's name was daily profaned, and the miners amused themselves in card-playing, smoking, and sometimes in drinking, when any of their number had been to the town for supplies, which happened once a month.

It was the last day of December, and snow was fast falling as the miners came straggling in from their work. They fed their mules, ate their suppers, and settled down for an evening's game in Captain Will's cabin, where they usually gathered. Two of them had gone on the monthly trip for supplies down to Pueblo, and as it drew towards midnight the men began to wonder where they were.

“Come!” at last exclaimed Captain Will, “let's look out

and see if the boys are coming! Time they were here three hours ago; wonder if the snow has bothered 'em!"

So out went a dozen of the men into the storm, just in time to see, far down the trail, two faint glimmers of light, which proved to be the lanterns of the absent ones.

"I say, what has Tom got in his arms?" exclaimed one, as the men and mules came nearer. "It looks like a baby for all the world!" and a laugh went up from the men at the idea. "Say, Tom, been kidnapping to-day?"

But the man, dismounting, ran toward the cabin with his burden, not waiting to explain, and the rest crowded around him as he laid on one of the rough benches the body of a sweet little girl, who seemed to be dead.

"Stand back, boys! Give her air!" commanded Captain Will, as he chafed her little cold hands, while another rubbed her feet.

Great was their joy when she opened her eyes; but, frightened at the sight of so many men, she closed them again, crying, "Mamma! mamma!"

The captain sent them all away, and tried in vain to soothe her; but at last, worn out with crying, she dropped asleep, and he laid her on his own bed. Not till then did he have a chance to ask the men about her. It seems that on their homeward trip they heard a child sobbing, and found this little one trying to waken her mother, who lay in the snow by the roadside. They dismounted, and found that the poor woman was dead. They searched her pockets, but found nothing that would give them any clue; so after burying her, they came back again to camp, bringing the child.

Shanty Flats was a different place now. After a few weeks the little girl grew more forgetful of her loss, and began to get used to her strange surroundings. When they asked her name, she always said, "I'm mamma's darling," and seemed to know no other title.

So they called her their little lady, till one night, as they sat around the fire, Captain Will said: "Boys, I've been thinking about a name for the little one yonder asleep. I'd like for her to be called New Year. I know it ain't a common name for a human being; but she came to us at midnight on December 31, and she's making a new kind of year for us, and I like a name that means something. What do you say?"

"Good for you, cap'n!" "You've hit it!" "Three cheers for our little New Year!" went up all over the room.

He spoke truly; it was a new year for them all, especially after the night when she first knelt down by the bedside in the inner room of the cabin, and prayed: "God bless my dear, dead mamma, and mamma's darling! Please, God, bless everybody, and make them good, and help me be a good girl, and take care of me, for Jesus' sake!"

The door was ajar, and as the sweet voice was heard, every man there dropped his cards and listened. And they didn't take them up again, either; for when Captain Will came out of the bedroom, his eyes were misty as he said: "Boys, does it seem to you that we ought to gamble so near that child?"

The boys didn't say what they thought; but little New Year never saw any gambling. One day a man swore in her hearing; but it was the only time, for a dozen cried out, "Hush, Jim! For shame! Remember the child!"

Oh, she was such a delight in their lives! There was a rivalry as to who should tell her the best story, or make her the prettiest toy; and when the glorious Colorado summer came, every kind of wildflower was brought to her. Sometimes they took her down into the mine for a little while, and any one of them considered it a special privilege for her to go to walk with him. To every man there she represented something sweet and pure in his past. Her favorites among them were Captain Will, who took the most care of her, and one of the Scotchmen, who told her she looked like the little blue-eyed lassie he lost years ago.

So the weeks and months went by, and the new interest in their lives made the work less toilsome. Never had a child so many presents at Christmas; for every one had something for her, either of his own make, or bought at the town, and she danced with delight over her new possessions.

"I think God has been very good to me," said she, gravely, that night, "to make you think to give me so many pretty things."

The next day word was passed that little New Year was sick; and, in spite of all they could do, she grew worse hour by hour. The men wandered around aimlessly, with

sad faces. One of them, who had been a medical student, tried all his skill, but there was no change for the better; and, just a year from the night she came, she lay apparently dying. The men clustered together in the room, and Captain Will sat by the bedside, his face buried in his hands. It was very still until one of them spoke low: "Boys, can't somebody pray? Seems as if it's the only thing left to do."

They looked at each other, but no one stirred. A moment more and the roughest of them all fell on his knees and prayed: "God, we're rough men and wicked men. Thou knowst it, Lord. But there's summat in thy Book about askin' and receivin', so we ask for our little girl to be given back to us. She's the sunlight o' the camp, and the only thing that keeps us from the bad. Thou doesn't need her, Lord, and we does. God, save her life, and we'll be better men." And "Amen" came from lips unused to prayer.

The dear Heavenly Father heard and answered, for when the sun arose little New Year opened her eyes and said, "Oh, the pretty light! I want to get up and have my breakfast."

"Praise the Lord!" broke from Captain Will's mouth. "Boys, I'm going to serve him from this day forward."

Nor was he alone; for a work of grace began in the camp, and many a one learned to pray for himself.

The winter wore away, and one night early in the spring Captain Will said: "Boys, I've something to say to you. I've been thinking that if this was my little girl I'd want her to have an education, and a better bringing up than this child is getting among us men; and if you're willing, boys, as I feel your right to her is just as good as mine, I want to adopt little New Year as my daughter, and take her East to have her brought up as she should be. Now, say just what you think."

The matter was discussed till late at night, and at last, though reluctantly, they all agreed that it was the best thing to be done; and Captain Will, after selling out his claim, started for New York. How the men did miss the child and talk about her! and when, in a couple of months, a long letter came from the East, they were eager to hear it read. One part of it ran thus: "Friends, I can't begin to tell you how happy I am. Little New Year (for I still

call her by the old name, though at school she is Nellie) and I talk about you very often. I have bought a home here, where every one of you will be gladly welcomed; and, boys, God is in our home, and may he bless you and save you, so that if we never meet here, we may meet in heaven."

May Agnes Osgood.

A DISTURBED PARENT.

FIVE daughters — four of them engaged!
Good heavens! I shall go mad!
For such a surfeiting of love
No parent ever had.
The very atmosphere is charged
With it: no matter where
I go about the house, I trip
Upon some whispering pair.

At evening, when I take my pipe,
And seek a quiet nook
To read "The Evening Times," or else
Some new and tempting book,
I ope, perhaps, the parlor door,
When a familiar sound,
Quite unmistakable, suggests
It is forbidden ground.

So then more cautiously I turn
To our reception-room;
But lo! again upon my ear,
From its romantic gloom,
Comes softly out with emphasis
That warning, when I start
And leave, as Lady Macbeth wished
Her guests would all depart.

My next resort is then the porch,
Where roses trail and bloom:
Ha! is it echo that betrays
The joys of yonder room?

Ah, no ! a startled "change of base"
Reveals the presence there
Of Cupid's votaries ; and, alas !
There's still another pair.

"But sure," I think, "my library
Will be a safe retreat."
So there at once, with quickened step,
I take my weary feet.
Vain hope ! that warning sound again
Breaks on my listening ear :
Thank Heaven, my youngest has not yet
Attained her thirteenth year !

Hark ! there she is ! and, bless my heart,
That popinjay, young Lunn,
Is at her side : I do believe
That she, too, has begun.
Oh, ye who love to sit and dream
Of future married joys,
Pray Heaven with honest fervor that
Your girls may all be boys !

THE LITTLE LION CHARMER.

OUTSIDE the little village of Katrine,
Just where the country ventures into town,
A circus pitched its tents, and on the green
The canvas pyramids were fastened down.

The night was clear. The moon was climbing higher ;
The show was over ; crowds were coming out,
When, through the surging mass, the cry of "Fire !"
Rose from a murmur to a wild, hoarse shout.

"Fire ! fire !" The crackling flames ran up the tent,
The shrieks of frightened women filled the air,
The cries of prisoned beasts weird horror lent
To the wild scene of uproar and despair.

A lion's roar high o'er all the cries!
There is a crash — out into the night
The tawny creature leaps with glowing eyes,
Then stands, defiant, in the fierce red light.

“The lion's loose! The lion! Fly for your lives!”
But deathlike silence falls upon them all,
So paralyzed with fear that no one strives
To make escape, to move, to call!

“A weapon!” “Shoot him!” comes from far outside;
The shout wakes men again to conscious life;
But as the aim is taken, the ranks divide
To make a passage for the keeper's wife.

Alone she came, a woman tall and fair,
And hurried on, and near the lion stood;
“Oh, do not fire!” she cried; “let no one dare
To shoot my lion — he is tame and good.

“My son! my son!” she called; and to her ran
A little child that scarce had seen nine years.
“Play! play!” she said. Quickly the boy began:
His little flute was heard by awestruck ears.

“Fetch me a cage,” she cried. The men obeyed.
“Now go, my son, and bring the lion here.”
Slowly the child advanced, and piped, and played,
While men and women held their breaths in fear.

Sweetly he played, as though no horrid fate
Could ever harm his sunny little head.
He never paused, or seemed to hesitate,
But went to do the thing his mother said.

The lion harkened to the sweet, clear sound;
The anger vanished from his threatening eyes;
All motionless he crouched upon the ground,
And listened to the silver melodies.

The boy thus reached his side. . The beast stirred not.
 The child then backward walked, and played again,
 Till, moving softly, slowly from the spot,
 The lion followed the familiar strain.

The cage is waiting — wide its open door —
 And toward it, cautiously, the child retreats.
 But see! The lion, restless grown once more,
 Is lashing with his tail in angry beats.

The boy, advancing, plays again the lay.
 Again the beast, remembering the refrain,
 Follows him on, until in this dread way
 The cage is reached, and in it go the twain

At once the boy springs out, the door makes fast,
 Then leaps with joy to reach his mother's side;
 Her praise alone, of all that crowd so vast,
 Has power to thrill his little heart with pride.
Harriet S. Fleming.

THE SNAKE IN THE GRASS.

COME, listen a while to me, my lads,
 Come listen to me a spell!
 Let that terrible drum
 For a moment be dumb,
 For your uncle is going to tell
 What befell
 A youth that loved liquor too well.

A clever young man was he, my lads,
 And with beauty uncommonly blest,
 Ere with brandy and wine
 He began to decline,
 And behaved like a person possessed.
 I protest
 The temperance plan is the best.

One evening he went to the tavern, my lads,
He went to the tavern one night!
And drinking too much
Rum, brandy, and such,
The chap got exceedingly "tight,"
And was quite
What your aunts would entitle a "fright."

The fellow fell into a snooze, my lads —
'Tis a horrible slumber he takes;
He trembles with fear.
And acts very queer;
My eyes, how he shivers and shakes
When he wakes,
And raves about great horrid snakes!

'Tis a warning to you and to me, my lads —
A particular caution to all,
Though no one can see
The viper but he —
To hear the poor lunatic howl
How they crawl
All over the floor and the wall!

The next morning he took to his bed, my lads,
Next morning he took to his bed;
And he never got up
To dine or to sup,
Though properly physicked and bled;
And I read,
Next day, the poor fellow was dead!

You have heard of the snake in the grass, my lads,
Of the viper concealed in the grass;
But now you must know
Man's deadliest foe
Is a snake of a different class!
Alas!
'Tis the viper that lurks in the glass!

J. G. Saxe.

MIKE'S CONFESSION.

Now, Mike was an hostler of very good parts,
 Yet sly as a church-mouse was he;
 And he came to confess to the new parish priest,
 Like a pious and true devotee.

When his sins were reeled off till no more could be found,
 Said the priest: "Are you sure you've told all?
 Have the mouths of the horses never been greased,
 So they couldn't eat oats in the stall?"

"With respect to your riv'rence," said Mike, with a grin,
 "Sure for that ye may lave me alone;
 I've scraped till there's niver a sin left behoind —
 Me conscience is clane to the bone!"

So absolved, happy Mike went away for more sins,
 Till the day came around to tell all;
 And the very first thing he confessed he had greased
 The mouth of each horse in the stall!

"How is this?" said the priest; "when here but last week
 You never had done this, you swore."
 "Faith, thanks to yer riv'rence," said Mike, "sich a thing
 I niver had heard of before!"

H. H. H.

 EGOTISM.

BERLUBBED LADIES AND GENNERMENS, — Man, including de opposin' sect, what am bawn of woman, has moah or less egotism, generally moah.

De man what fails ter preshiate hisseff needn't 'spect no preshiashun from odder folks. Berlubbed, dis heah mute inglorious Milton bizness don't pay. I has tried it. I tells yer — toot yer own horn, and toot it loud and frequently.

We often hear of de man who thinks too much of hisseff. Dar am no man who thinks too much of hisseff — in his

own mind. Howsumebber, I admits dat ef eberybody was as big as he feels, dar wouldn't be standin' room in dis heah kentry.

Dar's a differunce between de egertistical man and de self-conseated man. Self-conseate am a man widout a collar carryin' a gold-headed cane. De self-conseated man allows dat eberybody am a fool. He includes eberybody in dis heah category 'ceptin' one man. I needn't tell yer who he am. De self-conseated man am ginerally a good-natured sort ob a fool. He nebber quarrels wid nobody. Ef odder folkses don't believe de same as he does, he feels sorry and pities dar ignurence.

Ef some folkses in dis heah Tabernacle what am mighty slack in droppin' money inter de hat when it am bein' passed — I says ef dey was only half as big as dey berleebbs dat dey is, dar wouldn't be room in dis heah United States for more den two lawyers, one reporter, and a membrum ob de Texas Legislatur.

Once moah I tells you — don't be scared ter speak well ob yerseff, for dar am plenty folkses, right heah in dese sacred presinks, dat am only too glad to talk ebil about yer. Uncle Mose, pass de hat.

Rev. Whangdoodle Baxter.

THE BATTLE FLAG AT SHENANDOAH.

THE tented field wore a wrinkled frown,
And the emptied church from the hill looked down
On the emptied road and the emptied town,
That summer Sunday morning.

And here was the blue, and there was the gray,
And a wide green valley rolled away
Between where the battling armies lay,
That sacred Sunday morning.

Young Custer sat, with impatient will,
His restless steed, 'mid his troopers still,
As he watched with glass from the oak-set hill,
That silent Sunday morning.

Then fast he began to chafe and fret;
"There's a battle flag on a bayonet
Too close to my own true soldiers set
For peace this Sunday morning!

"Ride over, some one," he haughtily said,
"And bring it to me! Why, in bars blood red
And in stars I will stain it, and overhead
Will flaunt it this Sunday morning!"

Then a West-born lad, pale-faced and slim,
Rode out, and, touching his cap to him,
Swept down, as swift as the swallows swim,
That anxious Sunday morning.

On, on through the valley! up, up anywhere!
That pale-faced lad, like a bird through the air,
Kept on till he climbed to the banner there
That bravest Sunday morning!

And he caught up the flag, and around his waist
He wound it tight, and he fled in haste.
And swift his perilous route retraced
That daring Sunday morning.

All honor and praise to the trusty steed!
Ah! boy, and banner, and tell God-speed!
God's pity for you in your hour of need
That deadly Sunday morning.

Oh, deadly shot! and oh, shower of lead!
Oh, iron rain on the brave, bare head!
Why, even the leaves from the trees fall dead
This dreadful Sunday morning!

But he gains the oaks! Men cheer in their might!
Brave Custer is weeping in his delight!
Why, he is embracing the boy outright
This glorious Sunday morning!

But, soft! Not a word has the pale boy said.
 He unwinds the flag. It is starred, striped, red
 With his heart's best blood; and he falls down dead
 In God's still Sunday morning!

So; wrap his flag to his soldier's breast;
 Into Stars and Stripes it is stained and blest;
 And under the oaks let him rest and rest
 In God's own Sunday morning!

Joaquin Miller.

THE WEE, WEE BAIRNIE.

“STEP gently, step gently.”

I stepped hastily back. I feared I had been treading on some of the old man's flowers.

He leaned on his spade, and made no motion for some minutes. At length he raised his head, and in a husky voice began, —

“Ay, sir, I mind the time as well as 'twere yesterday, and it's forty years since, when oor wee bairnie died. It was his fourth birthday, and he stopped up tae wait till I cam' home wi' a bit of present for him. I sat doon be the fire tae wait for my supper (my wife was ben the hoose bakin'), when I heard the patterin' o' his little feet, an' I looked up an' held oot my arms for him. He didna come runnin' tae them sae quick as usual, an' when I had him on my knees, says I, ‘An' fa'll ye be, ye wee bit nickum?’

“‘I'm fayther's wee, wee bairnie.’

“An' wi' that he nestled closer to me. He didna seem cheery, sae I ca'd the doggie cam' lazy-like frae his corner stretchin' his legs. The bairnie put doon his little han' an' strokit the dog's head. But he didna get up an' play wi't, an' seemed tired like.

“‘Janet,’ ca'd I ben the hoose, ‘what ails the bairnie?’

“‘Ails him,’ said she. ‘Awa' wi' ye! naethin' ails him.’

“‘But he's tired-like.’

“‘Hoot,’ says she, ‘nae wunner sittin' up till this time o' night.’

“ ‘Ah ! but it’s nae that ; it’s mair than tired he is, Janet ; he’s nae weel ’

Janet took up the child in her arms.

“ ‘Aweel,’ said she, ‘and he’s no weel. I’ll pit him tae bed when I hae done wi’ the bakin’ ;’ an’ wi’ that she sat him down i’ the floor. Forty years is it since ; but I can see the laddie standin’ there yet, wi’ his head hangin’ owre his clean frock, and his wee bit leggies bare tae the knees.

“ ‘Pit him tae bed the noo, Janet. Dinna’ min’ the cakes.’

“ She took him up again in her airms, and as she did sae, his wee facie becam’ as pale as death, an’ his little body shook a’ ower. I never waited a meenit, but awa’ I ran oot at the door for the doctor as hard as I could rin, twa miles across the field, wi’ my heart beatin’ hard at every step. The doctor wasna in. Wi’ a sair heart I turned back. I stopped runnin’ when I got till our gate, and walked quietly in. ‘The doctor nae in. Waur luck,’ said I, as I crossed the door. Nae a word. I turned roun’ intae the kitchen, an’ there was sich a sicht I could never forget. In ae corner was my wife lying on the grun’, an’ beside her the wee bit bairnie — nae a soun’ frae either o’ them. I touchit my wife i’ th’ shouther, and she lookit up, an’ then rose up wi’out a word, an’ stood beside me, lookin’ at the form of the little laddie. Suddenly he gied a start, an’ held out his arms tae me — ‘Am I no yer ain wee, wee bairnie, fayther?’ ‘Ay, ay,’ said I, for I could hardly speak, an’ I knelt doon beside him an’ took his little hand. My wife knelt doon on th’ other side of him and took his other hand. ‘Yer wee, wee bairnie,’ he muttered, as tae himsel’ — for he gied himsel’ the name — an’ then he laid his head back, an’ we could see he was gone. The doggie came an’ lookit in his face, an’ lickit his han’, an’ then wi’ a low whine an’ lay doon at his feet. Niver a tear did we weep ; but we sat baith o’ us lookin’ intae the sweet wee facie til’ the mornin’ broke on us. The neebors cam’ i’ the mornin’ an’ I rose up and spoke tae them ; but my wife she never stirred, nor gied a sound, till ane o’ them spoke o’ when he wad be carried tae the auld kirkyaird. ‘Kirkyaird,’ said she, ‘kirkyaird ! Nae kirkyaird for me. My bairnie shall sleep whaur he played — in oor garden. Nae step farer.’ ‘But it’ll niver be allowed.’ ‘Allowed !’ cried she ; ‘the bairnie shanna stir past the end o’ the garden.’ An’ she had her

way. Naebody interfered; an' there he lies, jist whaur ye were gaun to pit yer fit, an' there he'll lie tae the resurrection mornin'. An' ilka evenin' my wife comes an' sits here wi' her knittin', an' we never tire o' speakin' o' him that lies beneath."

And the old man bent down and passed his hand over the loose mould, as if he were smoothing the pillow of his "wee, wee bairnie."

W. T. H.

THE MODERN CASABIANCA.

A BOY stood on the burning deck
 When all but him had fled;
 That is, his mother had gone out in the kitchen to stir up
 her sponge, never supposing he would try to get the
 cards out of the stove,
 And his father had gone to bed.

The curling flames they scorched his sock,
 And blistered both his legs;
 But it was a seventy-five cent deck, linen-faced, double-
 headed, and marked on the corners, and he meant to
 save them, though he had to drain the cup of misery
 E'en to the bitter dregs.

So toiled he on, 'mid blinding smoke,
 Resolved to squelch his foes,
 But suddenly he jumped up in the air, gave utterance to a
 yell that would have awakened a juryman, because,
 by an unfortunate accident, he got
 A spark between his toes.

There was a sound of shuffling feet,
 The boy, oh, where is he?
 You can hear him, of course, and if you will just get in
 position, and look through this crack in the wood-
 shed door, you can see him
 Across his father's knee.

W. E. Williams.

THE BABY AND THE SOLDIERS.

ROUGH and ready the troopers ride,
Great, bearded men, with swords by side;
They have ridden long, they have ridden hard,
They are travel-stained and battle-scarred;
The hard ground shakes with their martial tramp,
And coarse is the laugh of the men in camp.

They reach the spot where the mother stands
With a baby clapping its little hands,
Laughing aloud at the gallant sight
Of the mounted soldiers fresh from the fight.
The captain laughs out: "I'll give you this,
A handful of gold, your baby to kiss."

Smiles the mother: "A kiss can't be sold.
But gladly he'll kiss a soldier bold."
He lifts the baby with manly grace,
And covers with kisses its smiling face,
Its rosy cheeks and its dimpled charms,
And it crows with delight in the soldier's arms.

"Not all for the captain," the soldiers call;
"The baby, we know, has one for all."
To the soldiers' breasts the baby is pressed
By the strong, rough men, and by turns caressed;
And louder it laughs, and mother fair
Smiles with mute joy as the kisses they share.

"Just such a kiss," cries one trooper grim,
"When I left my boy I gave to him;"
"And just such a kiss on the parting day
I gave to my girl as asleep she lay."
Such were the words of the soldiers brave,
And their eyes were moist as the kiss they gave.

A BOY'S REMONSTRANCE.

I AM feeling very badly ; everything is going to smash ;
 All the things I have believed in are going with a crash !
 The folks are growing learned, and all their wretched
 lore is

Used to shake a fellow's faith in his best beloved stories.
 The fairies have been scattered, and the genii they have
 gone ;

There are no enchanted castles ; they have vanished, every
 one.

Aladdin never lived, and the dear Scheherazade,
 Though very entertaining, was a much mistaken lady.

Of course I see through Santa Claus, I had to, long ago ;
 And Christmas will be going, the next thing that I know.
 For I heard — I wasn't listening — I heard the parson say,
 He had really — yes, had really — grave doubts about the
 day.

And as for Master Washington, they say the goose should
 catch it,

Who believed a single minute in that story of the hatchet.
 They've given a rap at Crusoe, and dear old Friday. Why !
 We'll all believe in Friday, we boys will, till we die !
 They may say it's not " authentic," and such like, if they
 dare !

When they strike a blow at Friday, they hit us boys. So,
 there !

And I've been reading in a book, writ by some college
 swell,

That there never was a genuine, a *real live* William Tell !
 That he was just a myth, or what we boys would call a
 sell ;

That he didn't shoot the apple, nor Gesler, not a bit —

That all the other nations have a legend just like it.

I think it's little business for a college man to fight
 Against these dear old stories, and send them out of sight.
 And all the boys are just as mad ! and so the girls are, too ;
 And so we called a meeting to decide what we should do,
 And we passed some resolutions, because that is the one
 And only way for meetings, when it's all that can be done.
 I send you here a list :

Resolved, that there *was* a William Tell;
 That by his bow and arrow the tyrant Gesler fell.
 Resolved, that he was *not* a myth, whatever that may be, —
 But that he shot the apple, and Switzerland was free.
 Resolved, that Crusoe lived, and Friday, and the goat.
 Resolved, that little Georgy his father's fruit-tree smote,
 And owned up like a hero. Resolved, that all the science
 Of all the learned professors shall not shake our firm reliance
 In the parties we have mentioned; and we do hereby make
 known.
 The fact that we boys feel that we have some rights of our
 own —
 And request that in the future these rights be let alone.
Anonymous.

THE OLD SERMON.

THE solemn hush of midnight is brooding over the earth;
 Alone in my state and splendor, I await for the new day's
 birth;
 No sound breaks in on the stillness, no sound in the silence
 calls,
 So heavy the velvet hangings, so thick are my study walls.
 I would sit in the dusty silence, and rest both heart and
 brain,
 And gather strength for the warfare that day brings on
 again;
 But a picture comes in the darkness of a place I knew when
 a boy,
 And it chills the heart that is throbbing with the flush of
 worldly joy.
 'Tis a simple church in a meadow-land,
 Where I see a white-haired pastor stand,
 Who warns his flock with uplifted hand,
 "Except ye be like the children,
 Ye cannot enter in."

There's a glitter and glory around me that is born of a
 guinea's shine;
 I measure a thousand acres, and know that their wealth is
 mine;

I hear in the shout of the gaping crowd the homage they
bear my name —

It is written in radiant letters on the glittering roll of fame;
The sound of the words I utter is echoed from land to land,
And the helm that sways a nation is trusted within my
hand;

And my heart grows faint like a woman's when the dusk of
twilight nears,

And I dread the solemn midnight when the white-haired
man appears;

For soul and spirit become perplexed;
I dread the words that are coming next,
The awful sound of that simple text:

“Except ye be like the children,
Ye cannot enter in.”

Long and fierce was the struggle that placed me upon the
height;

I wrought with a will for the lustre that has made my name
so bright;

I won me a crown of laurel, and wreathed it around my
brow,

And the wounds of the mighty conflict I bear about me
now.

And mine is the right of resting, of pausing a while in the
strife,

For I fought the fight like a victor, and conquered the
thing called life.

But that picture will come in the darkness, and stifle the
firelight's gleam,

Till I pale and shrink like a culprit who is bound in a
nightmare dream;

For I see the old man standing there,
The lifted hands and the whitened hair,
And I hear the trembling voice declare:

“Except ye be like the children,
Ye cannot enter in.”

So I sit alone in the midnight, while the ghosts of the past
flit by,

And they warn me with shadowy fingers of the end that is
drawing nigh;

I think of the life within me, of the fierce and resistless
 will,
 And the frail and helpless body that must lie so cold and
 still,
 Till the quivering heart in my bosom grows faint and numb
 with fear,
 With dread of the awful summons that one day I must
 hear.
 And I turn with a shudder of loathing from the power I
 stooped to win,
 And I long for the heart of childhood, untouched, unsullied
 by sin;
 For the voice of truth falls on my ears,
 And memory calleth adown the years,
 While awed and frightened my soul still hears:
 "Except ye be like the children,
 Ye cannot enter in."

Anonymous.

CASEY AT THE BAT.

THERE was ease in Casey's manner as he stepped into his
 place;
 There was pride in Casey's bearing, and a smile on Casey's
 face.
 And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his
 hat,
 No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas Casey at the
 bat.

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands
 with dirt,
 Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on
 his shirt.
 Then while the New York pitcher ground the ball into his
 hip,
 Defiance gleamed in Casey's eye, a sneer curled Casey's lip.
 And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through
 the air,
 And Casey stood a-watching it in haughty grandeur there.

Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped —
“That ain’t my style,” said Casey “Strike one,” the
umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a
muffled roar,
Like the beating of storm waves on a stern and distant
shore.

“Kill him! Kill the umpire!” shouted some one on the
stand.

And it’s likely they’d have killed him had not Casey raised
a hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great Casey’s visage
shone;

He stilled the rising tumult, he bade the game go on:
He signalled to Sir Timothy, once more the spheroid flew:
But Casey still ignored it, and the umpire said, “Strike
two.”

“Fraud!” cried the maddened thousands, and echo an-
swered “Fraud!”

But one scornful look from Casey and the audience was
awed.

They saw his face grow stern and cold, they saw his mus-
cles strain,

And they knew that Casey wouldn’t let that ball go by
again.

The sneer is gone from Casey’s lip, his teeth are clinched
in haste:

He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate.
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of Casey’s blow.

Oh, somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining
bright.

The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are
light.

And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere chil-
dren shout:

But there is no joy in Bungtown — mighty Casey has
struck out.

THE COWBOY.

An adapted scene from Geo. M. Baker's play of "The Flowing Bowl."

CHARACTERS.

CHARLIE WILKINS, MAJOR FITZPATRICK, CLIFTON JEROME,
PETE (*colored*), JESSIE MORRIS.

SCENE. — *Drawing-room.* JESSIE *on lounge, reading a book.*
CHARLIE *seated L. of table.*

CHARLIE (*solus*). What an unmitigated nuisance to himself a fellow becomes when he's in love! At the outset, he has inoculated his system with a disease to which fever and ague are no great shakes. If he indulges in rosy dreams, the horrid nightmare of uncertainty wakes him with a cold sweat. He trembles with delight at a smile, he shivers with fear at a frown. He is a chameleon, forever changing his hues; red with joy, pale with fear, green with jealousy, and blue when left out in the cold. That is the sort of fellow I am: tossed to and fro like a rubber ball in the hands of that wilful beauty there, only too thankful if she does not end her game by giving me the grand bounce. By the express command of her high-and-mightiness, I was not to open my lips for thirty minutes. (*Looks at watch.*) Thank Heaven! time's up. (*Softly.*) Jessie! (*Pause.*) Jessie! (*Loud.*) Miss Morris!

JESSIE (*startling*). Good gracious! How you startled me! Well?

CHARLIE. Time's up.

JESSIE. Oh, I'm so sorry!

CHARLIE. Sorry! Pray, may I inquire what remarkable work is so entrancingly interesting that even the calls of affection are disregarded?

JESSIE. Why, it's perfectly lovely, awfully utter, too all but —

CHARLIE. Ah! philosophical, Concord school, and all that?

JESSIE. No: 'tis a romance of the West, — "Carl the Cowboy." Oh, such a hero!

CHARLIE (*aside*). Great Scott! she's unearthed another hero. I tremble. (*Aloud.*) Well, who's "Cowl the Cowboy"?

JESSIE. Carl the Cowboy, I said, sir! A modern knight of the glorious West, the free-born child of the prairie, the fearless rider, the unerring marksman, the champion of the lasso, the rescuer of unprotected females, the — the —

CHARLIE. For further particulars, see the "New York Rustler."

JESSIE. Oh, I just dote on that Carl! He is the realization of my dreams of a perfect hero. If I could only look at such a man! Oh, Charlie! there's a pattern for you: become like him, and I should adore you.

CHARLIE. Now, Jessie, pause. Much as I hanker for your adoration, there's a limit to human endurance; and mine stops just on the edge of the boundless prairie. I'm not going to set my foot on it: you are going too far.

JESSIE. Won't you, for my sake, become a cowboy, Charlie?

CHARLIE. Not even a calfboy. A pretty hero you've dug up this time! a red-shirted, long-booted, loud-swearing, tobacco-chewing, half-horse, half-buffalo, cattle-driver. Bah!

JESSIE. Don't you abuse my hero! I have set him on a pedestal in my heart of hearts.

CHARLIE. Well, shut him up there: if he should break out, the house couldn't hold him.

JESSIE. And you won't go West to oblige me?

CHARLIE. To oblige neither you nor Horace Greeley.

JESSIE. As a test of affection, Charlie?

CHARLIE. Those peculiar phases of love's delirium have become monotonous. I am surfeited with narrow escapes and thrilling situations. Something in the pastoral line might tempt me, but not your friend, or rather fiend, the cowboy.

JESSIE. Then you decline my request?

CHARLIE. With thanks.

JESSIE. Very well, sir! I know where to look for a man who *will* become the hero I desire.

CHARLIE. He has my warmest wishes for his success as a cowboy.

JESSIE. Either of your college boys would be glad of the opportunity.

CHARLIE. Try them. It's been nothing but fun for the boys; now let them try to please you, and 'twill be fun for me.

JESSIE. Oh, you cruel, heartless — I'll never speak to you again, long as I live! Never! (*Stamps her foot, and exit, L.*)

CHARLIE. Never! never! Should she stick to that, I shall lose her. For the first time I have dared to rebel, and I'm frightened. I'll call her back, humbly beg her pardon, and — and — No, no! That infernal cowboy stands in the way, and I can't swallow him. I'll give her up, and go back to town. (*Turns up stage.*)

(*Enter JEROME, R.*)

JEROME. Whither bound, Charlie?

CHARLIE. Home. The sea air does not agree with me.

JEROME. But Jessie does?

CHARLIE. Jessie be — Look here, old fellow, it's all up. The pretty but pouty Miss Jessie has found me a new field for missionary labor in the Far West: she wants me to become a cowboy. I kicked, and she stampeded. My dream of love is over.

JEROME. Ah! but you must humor her: if she desires it, be a cowboy.

CHARLIE. Now you're at it. Suppose Miss Moore should request the same favor of you?

JEROME. I should comply at once, and take the first favorable opportunity to appear before her in the dress and with the manners of one of those paper heroes, and thus convince her that the boasted heroism of these prairie plodders is the product of imagination, not of reality.

CHARLIE. I see: a masquerade.

JEROME. An idea which you will do well to adopt. Fortunately, I can assist you. I have in my trunk a complete outfit for this character, in which I once masqueraded, and which I thought might be of like use at the festivities here: it is at your service. Go to my room; equip yourself. I will talk with Jessie, and in due season will introduce you as a friend from the West. You can manage the rest.

CHARLIE. I can try. (*Giving hand.*) Clifton, you're a brick. I was just ready to crawl through a very small hole on my knees, but this lets me out whooping. Ah, ha! my lady, the free-born child of the prairie, the fearless

rider, the unerring marksman, the champion of the lasso, is on the trail.

JEROME. Hush! Here she is.

CHARLIE. I'm off: it's my test now. (*Exit, R.*)

(*Enter JESSIE, L.*)

JESSIE. Where's Charlie?

JEROME. He has just left me. He's to take the next train to town.

JESSIE. To town? Without seeing me?

JEROME. Poor fellow! He seems almost broken-hearted. I hope you have not been trifling with him.

JESSIE. Trifling with him! Do you call it trifling to ask a man to be a hero?

JEROME. Certainly not.

JESSIE. That's all I asked of him, — just to go West a little way, and be a little bit of a cowboyish hero. Cowboys are heroes, aren't they?

JEROME. There are many noble specimens of sturdy manhood among the rough herdsmen of the West. By the way, we have one here, an old friend of mine, Carlos Corbus.

JESSIE. I should like to meet him.

JEROME. You shall. He tells me he has come East to seek a wife; and now that this little affair of yours and Charlie's is off —

JESSIE. But it isn't; Charlie is off, but I — and the little affair — Run and call him back, will you, please?

JEROME. Too late. He said he must run for the train. Wait until you have seen my friend.

JESSIE. I don't want to see your friend: I want my Charlie. I've driven him off. (*Takes up book from sofa.*) Carl the Cowboy. (*Throws book up stage.*) I hate him. (*Exit, L.*)

JEROME. Ah, ha! our little maid is getting anxious. (*Enter MAJOR, C.*)

MAJOR. Is it there ye are, me by? Shure, it's in a hape of throuble I am intirely; and if your lagal lore could accomodate me wid a bit of advice, I'd be obleeged to ye.

JEROME. My legal lore is at your service, Major. State your trouble.

MAJOR. Shure, it's all along of the Widdy Morris.

JEROME. Mrs. Morris? Is she troubling you? Have you offended her?

MAJOR. There's no such good luck. She's the offinsive parthy. She's jist bubbling over wid love, and rattling it down on me hid loike a thousand of brick.

JEROME. With love? Major, you must be mistaken.

MAJOR. Don't ye belave it, me b'y. The widdy's no gosling. Whin she sets her oye on a man, she manes business, and wid the foire in that oye she jist frazes to him. Three toimes she swept the mathrimonial board wid her winning hand, an' I'm on deck for the fourth.

JEROME. You must have given her encouragement.

MAJOR. Not the wink of an oye. 'Tis the misfortune of innocinee to be misunderstood. It's the woire's did it, me b'y. In the interests of pace and justice I tillegraphed her, "Come down, me darling; somebody's dyin'." Whin she came I mit her at the dapò as a gintleman should, and escorted her to the house as a gintleman should. Since that toime she has me in her oye intirely. If I walk, she follows me; if I sit down, she snuggles op to me loike a chicken onder its mother's wing. The last of the Fitzpatricks is in danger, me b'y.

JEROME. About that escort from the depot, Major: was anything said?

MAJOR. Shure, I thried to make meself agraable. Did iver you hear of an Irishman escorting a lady, an' a foine, handsome lady as she is, on a dark road in a moonlight night widout spakin', onless he was a dumb fool?

JEROME. Of course you gave her your arm to lean upon.

MAJOR. Ov coorse. You wouldn't lave her alone to lean by herself, would you? I towld her I would support her, and wished upon me sowl it was me extrame happiness to so support her for the rist of her natural existence: sure, that's no lie.

JEROME. There's where you stumbled.

MAJOR. Don't you belave it. She did, and I jist passed my arm around her waist.

JEROME. Ah!

MAJOR. The betther to kape from stumbling, of course.

JEROME. Certainly. A pretty tight squeeze, Major?

MAJOR. Of course: you wouldn't have a man let a lady shlip.

JEROME. Nor such a chance. Of course, she thanked you for your attentions?

MAJOR. She opened her lips to; but I wouldn't have her fale onder obligations, and so I shtopped her.

JEROME. In the usual way?

MAJOR. Of course. Who tould you?

JEROME. Major, I congratulate you. Mrs. Morris is rich, comely, and agreeable. Moreover, without *encouragement* she has taken a fancy to you. My advice is, go in and win her: I will see you through.

MAJOR. Say me through! Shure, I could go it blind, had I the moind: if you'll say me out, you'll be doing the friendly act.

JEROME. Then, you do not return the widow's affection?

MAJOR. Oh, bother! that's jist what I'd loike. If I don't want it I must return it, d'ye moind?

JEROME. Then you must treat her coolly.

MAJOR. Shure, I have, — to ice crame and the loike; but the more frazin' the food, the warmer she grows.

JEROME. I can do nothing for you. You have given the lady sufficient reason to suppose that you love her.

MAJOR. Begorra, I've done me bist!

JEROME. Should you now retreat, a suit for breach of promise might be the outcome.

MAJOR. Brache of promise? Who tould you I axed her would she be moine?

JEROME. Then you have popped the question?

MAJOR. Niver a once. I aven axed an invitation to her nixt widding. A standin' invitation — at the roight of the broide.

JEROME. What did she say to that?

MAJOR. That I moight consider the matther settled: I could have the place.

JEROME. You have run your neck into a matrimonial noose. I withdraw from the case.

MAJOR. And lave me hanging? How will I withdraw from the noose?

JEROME. After the wedding I will cut you down with the knife of divorce.

MAJOR. We'll have the divorce foirst; it moight disturb the festivities afther the ceremonies.

JEROME. I believe, Major, you're half in love with the widow.

MAJOR. Shure, that's but half the truth you're belavin'.

JEROME. Then, what is the bit of advice you came to me for?

MAJOR. Sure, it's about the wordin' of a telegram I'll be afther sindin' ye whin I'm in town, consarnin' the foive hunder-dollar reward: would I say, as I said to the widdy, "Coomme down, me darlin'?"

JEROME. Ha, ha, ha! Major, you have the best of me. You shall have a cheek in five minutes. Shall I deduct my fee for advice from the amount?

MAJOR. Betther lave your fay where your advice lift me — hangin' to be cut down afther the weddin'.

(MRS. MORRIS *appears*, C.)

MRS. M. Major, dear.

MAJOR. Yis, my darlin'. (To JEROME.) D'ye moind the oye of her?

MRS. M. I'm going down to the shore. Are you very, very busy?

MAJOR. Busy, is it? Faith, your pleasure is the business of my loife.

MRS. M. Then come down, darling.

MAJOR. To be sure I will, me b'y — angel.

JEROME. Mind your eye, Major. 'Tis rough travelling where you are going, and my advice is to go slow.

MAJOR. Mighty encouraging advice. You may put it in the bill. For shlow toime I'll make the fastest record in the world, me b'y. — Coomin', my darlin'.

MRS. M. I hope I am not troubling you too much.

MAJOR (*taking her arm*). Faith, ye are, wid fear that you may shlip, so hug tight, and go slow, me darlin'. (*Exeunt*, C.)

JEROME. With his usual blundering good luck, the Major is on the high road to wealth and happiness.

(*Enter*, L., JESSIE.)

JESSIE. Has Charlie returned, Mr. Jerome?

JEROME. Haven't seen him, Jessie; but I have seen my friend from Texas, and promised him an introduction to you.

CHARLIE (*outside*). No shenanigin', stranger. I eat my meat rare, and don't you forget it.

JEROME. And here he is.

(*Enter*, R., CHARLIE, *as the cowboy*.)

CHARLIE. I say, pard, there's no swashability 'bout this ar place. I've sassed five fellers, and not a galoot dared draw his shooter, an' I'm jest spilin' for a fight.

JEROME. Never mind, Carlos, here's metal more attractive. — Miss Morris, my friend, Carlos Corbus, of Texas.

CARLOS. That's me, pard, Texas born, Texas bred, and bound to die on Texas sile, with my boots on.

JESSIE. Any friend of Mr. Jerome —

CHARLIE. Is yours truly (*Offers hand.*) Put it there. (*JESSIE, shrinking, places her hand in his.*) Don't be skeered, gal: I'm as gentle as a calf here, but out thar rile me, an' I'm a tearer. That's me.

JEROME. You'll find my friend very entertaining, Jessie. (*Goes up.*)

JESSIE. Don't go, Mr. Jerome.

JEROME. I must: I have business elsewhere, and I want you and Carlos to become better acquainted. (*Exit, C.*)

JESSIE (*aside*). I'm afraid of him. (*Sits on lounge.*)

CHARLIE (*sits on corner of table*). Miss Morris, those eyes of yourn have got the bulge on me: there's fire enough in 'em to set a prairie blazin'. I feel like the treed coon, when old Davy Crocket p'inted his gun, — "Don't shoot, I'll come down." That's me. (*Goes to lounge, and sits.*)

JESSIE (*jumping up*). But I don't want you to come down. (*Crosses to chair, R.*) I — I don't know what you mean.

CHARLIE (*taking position on table at corner nearest JESSIE, as before*). Mean business, that's me. I'm roaring Carlos of the prairie. I'm a dead shot, a boss horseman, and a sure slinger of the lasso. I've a big ranch, a big herd of cattle, and a big heart, all of which is yours truly. Now short, sweet, and to the pint: when will you marry me?

JESSIE. Well, I never!

CHARLIE. Oh, yes, you will. I'll give you a week to get ready. (*Crosses.*) Come (*offers hand*), put it there.

JESSIE (*rises and crosses to L.*). No, I never heard of such impudence. What do you take me for?

CHARLIE. A bit of spitfire who's going to take me as her tamer. (*Crosses, and attempts to seize her hand.*)

JESSIE (*crosses to R.*). Never, sir, never! I don't like your style of courtship.

CHARLIE. Perhaps you prefer the Texas style?

JESSIE (*trembling*). The Ter-Ter-Ter-xas style?

CHARLIE (*goes up C., and arranges his lasso*). When a Texas cowboy wants a wife, he goes out and lassoes her.

JESSIE (*aside*). Good gracious! I believe he's going to do it.

CHARLIE. After this fash. (*Throws lasso.*)

JESSIE (*running across to L.*). Oh, what will become of me?

CHARLIE. Missed! by the big buffalo! Missed! like any galoot. Ah, ha! spitfire, we'll try another fling.

JESSIE. Oh, please don't! I don't like it.

CHARLIE. You must be mine. I've spotted you, and I'm bound to scoop you. (*Throws lasso.*)

JESSIE (*running and crouching down in front of table*). Oh, help, help! Charlie! Uncle Pete!

CHARLIE. Missed again, by the great grizzly! Must I try the revolver?

JESSIE. Oh, won't somebody come?

(*Enter PETE, R.*)

PETE. Wha — wha — whar's de rumpus? Who call? who call?

CHARLIE. Ah, there's game. (*Throws lasso over PETE, pinioning his arms.*)

PETE. Here you, dar, stop your fool — (*Kicking and struggling.*)

CHARLIE (*goes up to door, C.*). You black scoundrel, how dare you interfere? (*Twitches rope.*)

PETE. You jes' stop dat ar'. Can't get my bref. Don't fool, will you?

CHARLIE. You're in the clutches of roaring Carlos. (*Twitches rope.*)

PETE. Quit your roarin', and luf me go.

CHARLIE. You go with me, roaring Carlos (*jerks rope*), the free-born child of the prairies (*jerks*), the fearless rider (*jerks*), the unerring shot (*jerks*), the champion of the lasso (*jerks*), — that's me. (*Exit, C., dragging PETE.*)

PETE. I's jes' a gone coon. (*Exit, shouting.*) Luf me go!

JESSIE (*looking around trembling, then rises*). What an escape! A wild man of the West, and I his wife: catch me! I'll take good care to be out of the reach of him and his lasso. Texas courtship, indeed! it may be romantic, but that sort of matrimonial noose is too binding for me. (*Exit, L.*)

